Ancient History in British Universities and Public Life

1715-1810

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Trinity Term 2016

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**Acknowledgements:**

I am indebted to the library staff and archivists of all the institutions featured in the Bibliography but particularly to the long-suffering staff of Bodleian Library Special Collections (through several moves) and of my own Corpus Christi. Brian Young has been a tower of strength as my supervisor, and Cath Howdle and Sara Gordon have kindly proof-read and commented on various drafts over many years. Shari Brinkman-Young kindly line-read the final draft and made many invaluable comments. The Arts and Humanities Research Council was so generous as to fund my studies for four years, and the Historical Perspectives Seminar at Glasgow and the Long Eighteenth Century Seminar at Oxford listened to various chapters over the years and offered a great deal of helpful feedback. My family, meanwhile, have succeeded throughout the long and troubled gestation of this thesis in preserving such sanity as I originally possessed.

Above all, thanks to Alex Brinkman-Young, without whom this thesis would never have been written, and with whom I hope to spend the rest of my life.
Over the eighteenth century, ancient history was increasingly read in English, appearing in new forms and interpretations. This reflected the development of history in universities as a subject not merely read, but taught. This teaching took on many forms: serving as a predecessor to other studies, building a knowledge base of case studies for 'higher' subjects, or (increasingly) an independent subject.

What ancient history was taught, how was it taught, why was it taught, and what did students go on to use it for? Ancient history as an independent subject had a limited role in the curriculum despite the foundation of Chairs of History in most universities. When it was taught as such, the focus was on explaining modern institutions via ancient comparisons; on the training of statesmen by classical examples; or, more rarely, on demonstrating a particular conception of social development. These uses of history could be seen across both national and subject boundaries. Whilst differences between universities are evident, evidence in the teaching of history suggests the absolute dichotomy between the English and Scottish systems has been overstated. The interesting case of Trinity College Dublin suggests common features across Britain in how “liberal education” was conceived of and how history fit into it.

The practical application of ancient history to the education of statesmen may be seen in the variety of ways it was used in political discourse. This is explored mainly in Parliament, the ultimate destination of the “statesmen” in whose training history was supposed to play a large part, via debates over questions of empire and imperial rights in the second half of the eighteenth century. Superior knowledge of ancient history constituted a rhetorical claim to the twin statuses of gentleman, being classically-educated, and statesman – showing understanding of historical context and precedent.
Ancient History as a subject of serious scholarly study underwent a notable development and expansion over the course of the eighteenth century. In 1688, no work of narrative ancient history that was not a direct translation of an ancient author had ever been published in English. There was a handful, but no more, of antiquarian works or very basic textbooks, essentially glossaries so small children could understand the more technical terms they ran across in Latin language lessons. 'Universal Histories' were common, but these tended to follow a fundamentally Christian schema from the Creation rather than focusing on classical antiquity alone, and even the most voluminous were relatively superficial in their treatment of any given period or society. However, by 1800 it would be hard to find an educated Englishman who had not read an original work of ancient history, and the whole history of Greco-Roman civilisation from Archaic Greece to the fall of Byzantium could be read in modern English.

This expansion of the literature of ancient history was mirrored by a sharp increase in its teaching in universities. This thesis explores how the increasingly formalised teaching of ancient history worked in British universities, as well as its influence on both the development of the subject and on the wider classical culture of Great Britain. What ancient history was taught, how and why, and what did the students do with their historical education?

It was recognised at the time that ancient history was, to use a modern phrase, a growth subject, and university-educated thinkers, politicians, churchmen etc. were influenced by examples and ideas derived from the politics and culture of the ancient world which they had imbibed. Whereas history had previously been a subject to be 'read' (for example, Degory Wheare's book On the Method and Order of reading History), it became over the eighteenth century an academic subject which was increasingly expected to be taught.

This thesis falls naturally into four parts. The first is a short introduction to the state of ancient historiography in the eighteenth century, and (perhaps less familiar material) to its status in schools and among young people, where the ideas of “liberal” and “useful” education intersected with the traditional grammar curriculum, and increasing quantities of historiography aimed at young readers. This is followed by surveys of the teaching of ancient history at the Anglican and the Scottish universities respectively (Parts II and III) and finally a
study of some of the ways ancient history was valued and used in political discourse (Part IV). The latter is explored through debates in Parliament about empire in America and India, as the Roman and to a lesser extent Athenian empires were seen as a major source of examples for how to run an empire successfully (or not).

The first part of the thesis, following a brief survey of previous scholarship in this general field, particularly, reviving David Womersley's depiction of ancient history as a potentially radical or radicalising study in the 1790s, attempts to define the genre of ancient history as it existed in the eighteenth century. It traces some major works written at the 'cutting edge' of the field, mostly outside university settings, and their evolving interpretations of the ancient world, followed by the main ways in which it was studied prior to university. John Pocock's idea of the 'enlightened narrative' of Roman history is explored with particular reference to the Roman histories of Charles Rollin, Nathaniel Hooke and Adam Ferguson, which all attempted to explain the collapse of the Roman Republic via a mixture of moral, social and economic factors. Hooke is a particularly interesting case, adopting a strongly revisionist view of the Republic where the aristocracy as a whole is presented as the principal cause of decline by subverting the democratic and levelling institutions of the middle Republic. Similar debates were at work in the first narrative histories of Greece, in particular the extremely anti-democratic conservatism of William Mitford. These differences changed the nature of history, from a commonly-agreed narrative to a source of debate and dissension which frequently seemed to involve contemporary politics. It may thus have appeared more important to educators, in schools and universities, that History be taught rather than simply read, to ensure students did not draw the 'wrong', potentially dangerous conclusions from their reading.

History was little taught in schools before the mid nineteenth century and is thus surveyed briefly, though there were interesting attempts to create a more 'useful' form of classical education which would concentrate on history and antiquities rather than mere classical languages, especially by John Clarke of Hull Grammar School and Butler of Shrewsbury. However, there was a flowering of books on ancient history aimed at a schoolboy audience, and even a few at the end of the century 'for young ladies'. These generally presented a simplified, highly moralistic narrative, but the importance of a continuous narrative was clearly recognised, as histories by question and answer (which began to appear in the 1690s), or collections of biographies, which had existed much earlier, were gradually superseded by abbreviations of narrative histories. These tended to excise passages of criticism or obscure
details in favour of portraying individual characters and their impact on their societies, with
'the fame which their contemporaries left them' as Oliver Goldsmith put it when explaining
how he had cut his History of Rome by just over a half for younger readers.

The teaching of history, along with the rest of the curriculum, took very different forms in the
eight British universities but key aspects are common across the British Isles. In seven of the
eight, History was formally taught in some fashion, the odd one out being King's College,
Aberdeen. Generally speaking Oxford and Cambridge were similar, the Scottish universities
were broadly comparable, though considerable differences emerged between the urban
universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh on the one hand, and the three smaller institutions on
the other, while Trinity College Dublin (TCD) was in most respects sui generis; it has been
described as a middle ground between Oxford and Glasgow, though this should not be taken
as evidence of a conscious attempt on the part of the Dublin authorities to steer such a course.

Oxford and Cambridge are considered together on both the university (i.e. professorial and
examination) and collegiate level. Among the professors, the traditional view of the Camden
and Regius chairs as essentially sinecures in the eighteenth century is modified a little by
some evidence of conscientious attempts at teaching in the 1780s and -90s, before a more
general and visible improvement in the 1800s. In terms of what was taught, we are
handicapped by the lectures of William Scott and John Symonds being lost, but there is some
evidence that the former gave courses of lectures on particular topics which varied year on
year, whilst the latter tried to cover 'universal history' in quite a general fashion. His successor
William Smyth was the first Regius Historian to distinguish clearly between 'ancient' and
'modern' history and stick mostly to the latter, though his lectures can give valuable evidence
of the place of 'history' in general in an early nineteenth-century education.

There is more evidence of history being taught in colleges at Oxford and Cambridge,
especially at Christ Church where there are complete records of the texts on which students
were examined at 'collections' (internal examinations); these included a heavy proportion of
history after the 1770s, though it is interesting to note that there was very little study of the
Roman Empire relative to that of the Republic or even classical Greece. Emmanuel,
Cambridge provides a more detailed case study of how historical material was taught, with a
set of 1780s lecture notes on Tacitus' Germania, which show it being used to explore the
beginning of 'modern' 'Gothic' institutions. Teaching, in general, was based on specific books
rather than periods or outline courses. There was a good deal of close reading as this manner of study was easily integrated into the system of small, regular college lectures. Authors were especially popular when they were considered examples of good literary style as well as historical interest, but increasingly in the latter years of the period historians were studied who were perceived as lacking literary merit.

Trinity College Dublin, like some individual colleges at Oxford, had a set classical curriculum to be studied by every student. Unlike those colleges, it also had a culture of active and constant teaching, and a functioning system of rigorous examination which continued without a break throughout the eighteenth century into the Victorian period. As elsewhere the examinations were oral but they were intensive both in 'science' and 'classics' and, crucially, compulsory. This curriculum has been neglected because of older approaches to institutional history concentrating on TCD's failure to produce distinguished academics or original scholarship – unsurprising in the context of junior fellows teaching over twenty hours a week on a huge variety of material. Trinity's curricular reading-list, if not exactly how it was taught, is relatively well-known, and on the arts side was dominated by Latin historians. In many ways, Trinity can be seen as a hybrid of the English and Scottish systems, but perhaps a more realistic view of the undergraduate institution is that Trinity managed to retain the spirit as well as the letter of its seventeenth-century statutes, which evolved in use rather than being ignored as they became obsolete. In England, by contrast, many of the statutes were much older and still less flexible, and evolution was further hampered by the divide between college and university. Such a comparative approach has not previously been applied to Dublin, although there is little new to be said about it in isolation.

In Scotland the foundation of chairs and lectureships in civil history encountered similar problems to the English chairs – they were badly filled and had no clear place in the dominant curriculum. Ancient history was particularly limited by the very low level of Greek possessed by students, most of whom did not encounter the language formally until they were already at university. However, lectures were given at Edinburgh by two long-serving Professors of Civil History, Charles Mackie and Alexander Tytler (later Lord Woodhouselee), and show a similar variety (and similar sized audiences) to those in England, albeit with a uniform 'universal history' structure. History was more significant as a part of other disciplines – divinity, in the form of ecclesiastical history which received considerable official support in Scotland, humanity (i.e. Latin) and especially moral philosophy, the crowning study of the
undergraduate curriculum and one for which the Scottish Enlightenment has been particularly remembered. The historical content of that course varied sharply depending on the professor, but most drew heavily on the classical world at least for case studies, and often also for their typologies of societies and constitutions, which remained informed by Aristotelian and Polybian models. Ancient examples had advantages over modern as teaching material, principally that interpretations of them could not easily be seen as attacks on presently established institutions or (especially) on religion. Humanity served as a preparatory study for this and other subjects, including Law, and thus often included an antiquarian course of 'Roman Antiquities' which preserved into the nineteenth century the renaissance structure of 'four antiquities' – religious, military, civil and social institutions, covered in a systematic but ahistoric manner.

Beyond the academy, ancient history remained a prominent part of cultural and political life in a variety of spheres. This study confines itself to one; the political discourse for which classical studies, and ancient history in particular, were so often held up as ideal preparation. Dozens of authors have written on how ideas, and concrete cases, from ancient history influenced the thinking of American colonists before and after the Revolutionary War, but the same influences were almost as strongly at work in Great Britain's Parliament as in the Constitutional Convention.

One of the major perceived uses of ancient history was in training young men for public affairs – this was so common an attitude as to be universal, and in some respects university teaching was adapted to benefit this end. From about 1770 there are comparatively full and reliable records of parliamentary debates, collated in several contemporary series, which allow a reasonable qualitative analysis of what was said in Parliament, though they are still clearly far from complete) The knowledge of ancient history played important practical roles in political discourse. Even as scholars were beginning in the late eighteenth century to challenge the idea that Roman, Greek and British political institutions were directly comparable, the precedents of ancient experience of warfare and empire were frequently asserted in parliamentary debate and, less frequently, contested by a variety of members. However, classical material was dominated by a relative handful of keen classicists, mostly on the opposition benches and mostly university-educated, who used their superior knowledge as a rhetorical claim to greater fitness to govern. The relevance of classical knowledge was not unchallenged; members who spent too much time on ancient history were accused of pedantry
and irrelevance, and could leave themselves liable to correction when stretching a point too far or mangling a quotation. However, the connections between history and statesmanship, and between classical learning and the status of 'a gentleman' were strong, and several members refer (possibly ironically) to attempts to remedy the defects of their education with private reading.

Debates in Parliament over the 'American question' show the *ancienneté* of political debate clearly, from discussions of what the concept of 'colony' had meant in ancient times to extended discussion of a backbench MP's desire to treat Boston as the Romans did Carthage. Politicians frequently adopted classical *persona* and thought of themselves in Roman terms; the Senator defending the integrity of the perfect constitution; the popular tribune (increasingly through the press as well as elective office); the Ciceronian prosecutor, and so on. Another informative case is the more populist, 'general knowledge' use of ancient history in the popular press, explored here via the essay-sheets of the early 1760s, which used ancient examples to veil modern critiques, including coded critiques of the crown and prime minister under the names of Roman emperors and favourites. More distant imperial frontiers also provided fruitful fields for classical analogies, with the Roman success in integrating and ruling a diverse empire seen as a model (whether positive or negative) for British rule in India – which also allowed Edmund Burke - a proud graduate of TCD - to adopt the Roman persona of the crusading prosecutor of imperial abuses in his impeachment of Warren Hastings, which clearly mirrored his idol Cicero's attack on Verres. Burke as an individual is a demonstration of how well a classical education could prepare the student for statesmanship – he has often been described as 'Britain's Cicero' for the manner in which he parlayed a classical, rhetorical education (Trinity College Dublin's classical reputation has already been mentioned) into a successful career as philosopher, orator, author and parliamentarian.
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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 General Introduction

Ancient history, defined broadly as the study of the Greco-Roman Mediterranean from the beginnings of the Greek city-states to around the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, underwent a remarkable development and expansion over the course of the eighteenth century. In 1688, virtually no work of narrative ancient history that was not a direct translation of an ancient author had ever been published in English. There was a handful, but no more, of antiquarian works or very basic textbooks, essentially glossaries so small children could understand the more technical terms they ran across in Latin language lessons. The common 'Universal Histories' tended to follow a fundamentally Christian schema from the Creation rather than focusing on classical antiquity alone, and even the most voluminous were relatively superficial in their treatment of any given period or society.¹ This had entirely changed by 1800, when it would be hard to find an educated Englishman who had not read an original work of ancient history. The whole history of Greco-Roman civilisation from Archaic Greece to the fall of Byzantium could be read in modern English, and frequently was.

A decline in Latin learning and the growth of vernacular literature in general do not explain this shift in focus. Translations of the major classical historians had been widely available as early as the mid-sixteenth century, when Shakespeare had almost certainly read Tacitus, Plutarch and parts of Cicero in English.² These texts grew in popularity throughout the seventeenth century and were read and excerpted, most often for the sententiae or nuggets of wisdom they could provide. Due, arguably, to suspicion of human, particularly youthful, capacity to come up with the wrong conclusions from such reading, they were less commonly read in full or reconfigured into new narratives.³

As the vernacular literature of ancient history grew, this increase was mirrored by a sharp increase in its teaching in universities. In addition to exploring how the formalised teaching of

¹ E.g. that by W.Howel, An institution of general history, from the beginning of the world to the monarchy of Constantine the Great (London, 1661), one of the most scholarly such histories, much referred to by Gibbon.
³ F.Cox-Jensen, Reading the Roman Republic in Early Modern England (Boston, 2012) pp.7 and 57-9.
ancient history worked in British universities, this thesis also examines the influence of that teaching on both the development of historiography and on the wider classical culture of Great Britain. This change in teaching was recognised at the time, with attendant concerns expressed as to how effectively or usefully the teaching in question was carried out, and frequent calls for its reform. Subsequently, university-educated politicians and public figures and other university-educated people were influenced by examples and ideas derived from the politics and culture of the ancient world which they had imbibed through higher education. Whereas history had previously been a subject to be 'read' (for example, Degory Wheare's book *On the Method and Order of reading History*), it became over the eighteenth century an academic subject which was increasingly expected to be taught. This dissertation explores how and why ancient history was read and taught by and to students, while offering some suggestions as to how they were expected to, and did, use their learning in the public sphere.

The following chapters fall naturally into four distinct sections. Part I introduces the state of ancient historiography in the eighteenth century, and its status in schools, where the ideas of 'liberal' and 'useful' education intersected with the traditional grammar curriculum, and among young people. Increasing quantities of historiography were aimed at young readers. The teaching of ancient history, along with the rest of the curriculum, took very different forms in the eight British universities. In seven of the eight, 'history' was formally taught in some fashion, including ancient history - the odd one out being tiny King's College, Aberdeen. Before 1715 this had only, in formal terms, been the case at Oxford, where there was a dedicated Chair of Ancient History. Generally speaking Oxford and Cambridge were similar, the Scottish universities were broadly comparable, though considerable differences emerged between the urban universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh on the one hand, and the three smaller institutions on the other.

Part II deals with the teaching of ancient history at the three Anglican universities, both at university and college level in the cases of Oxford and Cambridge. Trinity College Dublin was in many respects *sui generis*; it has been described as a middle ground between Oxford and Glasgow, though this should not be taken as evidence of a conscious attempt on the part of the Dublin authorities to steer such a course. They all had in common a tutorial system of

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4 D. Wheare, *De ratione et methodo legendi historias dissertatio* (London 1623), later translated by Edmund Bohun and by Wheare's successor as Camden Professor of Ancient History, Henry Dodwell.
teaching, where generalist Fellows worked with individual students or a small group as the main method of teaching. Part III considers the various functions of ancient history in the Scottish universities: as a subject in its own right, and as a key ingredient of other disciplines, principally Divinity, Humanity (i.e. Latin) and Moral Philosophy, within the large lecture-based courses common to those universities.

Part IV expands the perspective from the institutional to the national scale, examining the use of references to ancient history in political discourse. Beyond the academy, allusions to ancient history constituted a prominent part of cultural and political life in a variety of spheres. This study confines itself to one; the political discourse for which classical studies, especially the study of ancient history rather than literature alone, were so often held up as ideal preparation. Dozens of authors have written on how ideas, and concrete examples, from ancient history influenced the thinking of American colonists before and after the Revolutionary War. However, the same influences were almost as strongly at work in Great Britain's Parliament as in the Constitutional Convention, albeit far less studied. The particular cases of John Wilkes and Edmund Burke demonstrate these influences on individuals, spreading into domestic political debates in the pamphlet press of the early 1760s, and into foreign policy as conceptions of India and of colonial Empire in the modern sense evolved. Burke was among the graduates of Trinity College Dublin at the time when its curriculum was most dominated by ancient history; Wilkes was a well-read amateur classicist who had attended the Dutch university of Leiden, with its own strong tradition of historical scholarship. Politicians frequently adopted classical personae and thought of themselves in Roman terms; the Senator defending the integrity of the perfect constitution; the popular tribune; the Ciceronian prosecutor, and so on.

This drawing on and identification with the history of the Roman republic are both consequences and causes of the increased emphasis on ancient history in education. On the one hand, increased study of history in a systematic manner helped budding politicians lay claim to prominent places in a historic and cultural tradition which they shared with their peers. On the other hand, the increased publicity afforded to parliamentarians emphasised the importance of being on firm ground in making such claims; a misplaced assertion of classical authority would be recorded, published, and remembered; several such examples are

5 For a recent and popular summary of the topic see C.J.Richard, Greeks and Romans bearing gifts: how the ancients inspired the Founding Fathers (Lanham, MD 2008)
discussed in Chapter 11. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, politicians' speeches appear to be aimed at a wider audience than that in the House, and that development led to a more 'literary' and allusive manner of speaking. However, even before the widespread reporting of parliamentary debates the use of material from ancient history was common and widespread.

1.2 Classicism and Ancient History in the Long 18th Century

The scholars and theorists of reception studies have not been idle in discussing classical culture in the eighteenth century, and this thesis will build on much valuable and interesting scholarship on British, American and European classical culture. However, attention has been directed mostly toward 'classics' in general, with a focus on literature. Furthermore, reception studies have paid comparatively little attention to the teaching of classics, let alone history – perhaps because the field, as an outgrowth of classics, has sometimes wanted for firm historical grounding in the secondary period. Nick Cole has produced an informative survey of different 'strands' of classicism identified by various historians of eighteenth-century America, coming to the conclusion that attempts to fit Americans' ways of interpreting the connections between ancient and contemporary politics into one narrow model had proven unsatisfying. Rather, he argues that part of the real significance of classical culture and particularly ancient history was its protean nature; although there was broad agreement about what the ancient world had been like, this could be adduced as evidence or precedent for various ways of interpreting present problems, both social and political.

The history of historiography has also contributed extensively to the thesis as a whole, in that it has made clear how important the reading and writing of history was to eighteenth-century elite culture. John Pocock in particular has been influential in his discussions of the historical 'awareness' of the period. His *Barbarism and Religion* series (especially vol. 2 'Narratives of Civil Government') sets out a coherent and persuasive view of Enlightenment historiography, and of the Enlightenment in both Scotland and England. The idea of an English Enlightenment likely informs the study of ancient history. Pocock is particularly interested in

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what the evolution of the militia debate says about changing attitudes to governance and
citizenship, concluding that the English Enlightenment developed a particularly polite,
commercial and parliamentary attitude, regarding personal participation in political life, even
by the indirect means of voting, as a substitute for the classical exercise of citizenship by
bearing arms.\(^8\) This debate clearly shows the continuing importance of classical history in
providing evidence and legitimacy for political arguments.

However, Pocock continues the now-traditional division of history into neo-classical
narrative, antiquities, and the new 'Enlightened' or 'philosophical' history. He identifies the
latter, the 'Enlightened narrative' specifically with modern history – that is, the history of
Western Europe, and perhaps its encounters with the New World and the Indies, from the fall
of the Roman Empire to the development of 'a Europe of contending but co-existing states'.
The latter might be defined as the emergence of the Westphalian system, or perhaps the death
of Louis XIV and the end of his 'aspiration to universal monarchy'.\(^9\) Ancient and non-
European history are confined to the two 'old' genres; in particular, the neo-classical model
identified with Tacitus, which Pocock argues continued to serve as essentially a *speculum
principis*, merely with an expanded definition of 'prince' to include any politically-active
citizen.\(^10\)

Pocock, then, would expect to find the teaching and reading of ancient history aiming to
inculcate moral examples into future statesmen. He discusses the 'first decline and fall', the
end of the Roman Republic, in the third volume of *Barbarism and Religion*, contrasting
'French' and 'Scottish' treatments of it. The former he summarises as focused on money and
material wealth as a cause of moral and social decline; the latter he argues is more about
contrasting the ancient and modern civilisations – virtus vs. commercial politesse; ancient
imperium vs. the Westphalian system.\(^11\) The latter informs much of the discussion in Chapter
9, which deals with moral philosophy in the Scottish universities in detail, whilst there is
more on those historians who worked outside the academy, including Adam Ferguson, in
Chapter 3.

Paul Kewes gives more attention to ancient models, tracing a de-politicisation of history,

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\(^8\) J.G.A. Pocock *Barbarism and Religion* (5vols, Cambridge 1999-2014) i 103
\(^9\) Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion* iii 307
\(^10\) Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion* i 172-3 and ii 369-70.
\(^11\) Ibid. iii 357 (France) and 373 (Scotland)
including ancient history, in the years between the Revolution of 1688 and the 1780s, where popular history was less likely to be seen directly through the lens of present political concerns. Historical analogies, he says, became more subtle, general and broad, in contrast to the very pointed, person-to-person comparisons which were common currency in the Civil War and Restoration eras. This view is modified in Part IV, which shows continuation of that 'immediacy' of classical references in the 1750s-90s. Kewes' contention that such references declined in popularity is interesting and may be explained in terms of the increasingly obvious social, economic and moral differences between ancient Rome and contemporary Britain.

However, if history became depoliticised in the mid-eighteenth century, the process seems to have reversed with a vengeance in the 1780s and beyond; evidence from the Parliamentary and press debates of the 1760s and '70s calls into question how far Kewes' model applies even then. One of the closest connections between universities and the 'state of the art' in historical scholarship comes from David Womersley's Gibbon and the 'Watchmen of the Holy City'. Womersley brings together the political reception of Gibbon's Decline and Fall and of his critique of his alma mater. Oxford was identified with religious and political conservatism. Gibbon was adopted by radicals for his anti-clericalism but also, says Womersley, for his classicism, as the ancient world itself acquired subversive connotations in the French Revolution, with its numerous popular republics and violent uprisings. If this connection can be traced more precisely, it might go a long way to explain developments in the teaching of history in general – Womersley, however, confines himself to the 1790s and Oxford.

The evolving reception of some individual Greek and Latin historians has received more attention, especially Tacitus. Arnaldo Momigliano remains the most important author on 'Tacitism' and has identified a gradual increase in Tacitus' public profile and regard through the eighteenth century, from a low point in the first third of the century, rising to a high at the time of the American and French Revolutions. In the earlier period, criticisms of Tacitus centred on his lack of interest in institutions, which made him the despair of antiquarians, as well as his cynicism about matters political. In the age of the enlightened monarch, Tacitus' rulers were as unenlightened as possible, and even those like Galba who started as humane

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13 D.Womersley, Gibbon and the 'Watchmen of the Holy City': The Historian and his Reputation, 1776-1815 (Oxford 2002), especially chs. 2 & 8.
and rational administrators would be corrupted or destroyed by the pressures of empire.

By the 1770s, however, these 'faults' came to be seen as virtues, particularly the suspicion of absolute monarchs in general, as perhaps in some circles did Tacitus' cavalier dismissal of Christianity. Gibbon praised him extravagantly as the 'philosophical historian, whose writings will instruct the last generations of mankind'.\(^{15}\) His disdain of monarchy, the impossibility of the princeps as first among equals, seemed less of a failure of imagination and more a prescient vision that the 'mixed republic' was the only alternative to tyranny. Momigliano does not claim that Gibbon's vision of Tacitus is true, but that it was persuasive.\(^{16}\) Womersley, conversely, raises the concern that Tacitus' anti-monarchical associations might be seen as subversive by conservative opinion in the 1790s – any author quoted with approbation by Desmoulins might be a threat to stability.\(^{17}\) This question is considered in Chapter 5, where the mysterious absence of Imperial Rome from the comprehensive classical curriculum at Christ Church is discussed.\(^{18}\) Discussion of the historian Nathaniel Hooke in Chapter 3, and of Wilkes' *North Briton* in Chapter 10, address the potential radical or subversive uses of ancient history in other contexts.

Cicero, whilst not strictly speaking a historian, was commonly considered a better guide to the mentalités of the ancient world than the more conventional historians, and was the primary written source for most popular antiquarianism, including the teaching of antiquities. His continuing relevance as an orator and philosopher, particularly to the history of philosophy, has led to a certain amount of commentary on his reception, particularly focusing on his role as a model orator/rhetorician. Much has also been written on Middleton's monumental biography.\(^{19}\) General opinion of Cicero was less positive about his political career than was Middleton, who was frequently referred to not as Cicero's biographer but his panegyrist; however, nearly all agreed on his importance as a philosopher. Eighteenth-century visions of Cicero the political philosopher have been extensively studied; Cicero the putative statesman, less so. Robert Ingram in the *Brill Companion to Cicero's Reception* writes a whole article on 'Conyers Middleton's Cicero' but barely considers Middleton's presentation of Cicero's

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16 Momigliano 'Tacitus and the Tacitist Tradition' pp.128-31  
17 Womersley *Watchmen of the Holy City* p.229  
18 See pp.131-3  
political career, and covers Middleton's treatment of Roman history more generally in a couple of lines suggesting (without detail) a connection between Middleton's desire to portray 'the conversion of a free Government into a despotic' and his erratic political sympathies. Matthew Sharpe in the same work does consider Cicero the politician and his reception in Voltaire's Paris, but no similar work seems to have been done for Britain. Middleton himself wrote in his preface of how his classical education had stayed with him:

The scene of it is laid in a place and age, which are familiar to us from our childhood: we learn the names of all the chief actors at school, and chuse our several favourites according to our tempers or fancies: and, when we are least able to judge of the merit of them, form distinct characters of each, which we frequently retain through life.

This is more a political narrative than a philosophical preoccupation – ancient history as a tremendous story and fund of fascinating characters, where our allegiances as readers and political animals are engaged, and both form and are informed by our contemporary political sensibilities.

However, the reception of other historians has been largely neglected; the history of multiple readings of Livy from the Renaissance to the professionalisation of philology in the 19th century has not yet been written, nor has that of the Greek historians of Rome. Generally, the ancient historians have been regarded as a fixed and generic model of excellence in narrative and style for early modern and eighteenth-century authors, though there were interesting debates as to which of the ancient greats were the very best models, which began to articulate new concerns about authenticity, accuracy and relevance. Some old favourite authors, especially the epitomators of Roman history such as Florus, Eutropius and Victor, declined, reflecting a greater concern with original texts and primary sources, or their replacement as introductory texts by modern works as Latin became less and less a living language. It was possible by the seventeenth century to construct an introductory narrative more coherent and

23 See for example the translator's preface to Florus, *Epitome of Roman History* trans. E.S.Forster (Cambridge, MA, 1984) p.x; a similar point is made that the content as well as the style of Florus are much criticised by contemporary scholars in the anonymous translation of 1714; Anon. *Lucius Annaeus Florus, his Epitome of Roman History, from Romulus to Augustus Caesar* (London 1714). See also Thomas Browne's response to apparently widespread criticisms of the use of epitomes, discussed below p.30.
readable than a direct translation of one of these epitomators. On the other hand, serious scholars were increasingly concerned with the details which could not be afforded by a vague and brief outline. The late Roman epitomators had never been regarded as particularly good models of Latin style, so if they were no longer useful either as historical sources or as introductions to ancient history, they served relatively little purpose.\textsuperscript{24}

Philip Hicks offered a more specific assessment of what 'history' was, a tripartite division of new works into the antiquarian, concerned with details of past cultures, the long-term narrative of the whole history of a state or people and the specific, detailed history of a recent period or event.\textsuperscript{25} He also drew distinctions regarding authorship; arguing that the first two categories 'ought', according to eighteenth-century thought, to be written by dedicated scholars, as they required substantial original research, whereas the latter could and should be written by statesmen with personal experience of the events of which they were writing.\textsuperscript{26} Hicks follows seventeenth and eighteenth-century authors including the Earl of Clarendon in asserting classical precedents for this attitude, setting Plutarch and Arrian among the antiquaries, Livy as the prototypical scholarly historian, and Thucydides and Tacitus as statesmen-historians. Hicks, and his sources, are not accurate in saying this is a Classical division, though undoubtedly it was seen as such in the early eighteenth century by men lacking in classical learning. The examples of Dio Cassius and Polybius, statesmen who aimed to write the whole history of the rise of Rome, would have instantly occurred to a Gibbon or a Goldsmith.

Hicks' attempt to categorise individual ancient authors is not directly relevant to the writing of ancient history in the eighteenth century, but may suggest more about its reading. One would expect from Hicks' summary that the 'statesmen-historians' such as Xenophon, Tacitus and Dio Cassius would be considered more relevant to present political concerns, writing as they did from personal experience of the much-vaunted classical political sphere.\textsuperscript{27} Bolingbroke might well have agreed writing as he did that exempla not informed by personal experience would be worthless, whether written by an ignorant historian or read by a politically disengaged and inexperienced reader.\textsuperscript{28} The fact that this minority of canonical historians

\textsuperscript{24} M.L.Clarke, \textit{Classical Education in Britain 1500-1900} (Cambridge 1959) p.46
\textsuperscript{25} P.Hicks, \textit{Neoclassical History and English Culture from Clarendon to Hume} (Basingstoke, 1996)
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid. pp.7-17
\textsuperscript{27} Hicks, \textit{Neoclassical History} p.21
\textsuperscript{28} On which topic see D.Woolf, 'From Hystories to the Historical' in Kewes (ed.), \textit{Uses of History} p.44
included those most renowned for literary style, particularly in Greek, again would seem to suggest a higher value ascribed to them as a class. The growth of history as a specialist, if not yet professional, endeavour may be clearly seen from the fact that, whilst several prominent statesmen published philological and classical works, there was no great statesman-historian in the eighteenth century, and indeed there was not another in Britain for a long time to come.

A final influential figure has been Joseph Levine, whose reformulation of the 'Battle of the Books' to focus on classical philology as an important ground of dispute has offered several fruitful lines of enquiry. Levine argues that the close study of the classics, which had been defended by the Ancients as the basis of learning, was in fact taken over by 'modern' techniques of philology and antiquarianism. This ascribes definite significance to the antiquarian strand of classicism which may be found in eighteenth-century universities, particularly in Scotland, (discussed in ch.7) and created archaeology and cultural history. However, Levine argues that this improved knowledge of classical culture revealed discontinuities between ancient and modern society, thus reducing the immediacy and cultural influence of the ancient world as a source of wisdom. Levine's logic is impeccable, but examining the direct influence of ancient examples in political debate and discourse clearly calls into question the degree of decline which occurred over the eighteenth century. The close reading of parliamentary debates in Part IV shows that discontinuities between ancient and modern situations, whilst increasingly familiar, were not universally accepted, and did not necessarily affect the use of ancient examples.

1.3 University Education and the 'Liberal Education'

Vicesimus Knox, in his 1781 treatise *Liberal Education*, talks about an education in which history both 'furnishes necessary and ornamental knowledge in full measure' and 'tends to inspire noble, manly and generous sentiments'. Knox was an educationalist and pedagogue of considerable practical experience, having been a Fellow of St John's College Oxford (and later a prominent voice for university reform) before becoming Headmaster of Tonbridge School in 1778, a post he retained for 34 years. He wrote extensively on academic education as well as manuals of conduct for young men and works of literary criticism, all espousing a

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30 Levine, 'Ancients and Moderns Reconsidered' in *Reenacting the Past* pp.1-19
31 V.Knox, *Liberal Education, or a practical treatise on the methods of acquiring useful and polite learning* (London 1781) p.123
moderate and practical approach.\textsuperscript{32} For Knox, history is essential to the overall purpose of education, and understanding ancient societies is a major goal of studying classics, not a supporting field. Once the schoolboy has learned enough Greek and Latin to read fluently, he should be 'early initiated in the wisdom of the ancients' - their political history and (age-appropriate) philosophy.

Knox's chapters on the current state of schools, and universities, talk about how historians and philosophers are read in educational establishments purely for the quality of their prose. Students cannot, because the languages are dead, know Latin or Greek well enough to really appreciate the finest nuances of verses, arguments or interpretations. Knox is therefore quite clear that using translations is far from cheating; rather it allows students to get the most out of their study of the ancient world and its ideas without first developing a logically impossible mastery of the languages. He specifically recommends that students read translations of Plutarch and Thucydides due to their difficulty in the original, and he commends the more straightforward modern authors on the Roman Republic, Rollin and Goldsmith, above Livy and Polybius because they have a consistent and complete narrative, whereas the ancient texts are incomplete and thus require a lot of contextual knowledge to really appreciate them. Interestingly, Knox does not ascribe the same value to modern history, which he says will wait until much later in the student's education, and can be simply read out of any text-book.\textsuperscript{33}

However, whilst Knox is the author most people would associate with the term 'Liberal Education' he is very far from having coined it. The idea goes back to the Renaissance humanists; as it relates to the study of history it was much further developed by a Scotsman, George Turnbull. Turnbull was by turns a private tutor to quite young children in England and Scotland, a pedagogue accompanying young aristocrats on the Grand Tour and a Regent Master at the University of Aberdeen as a young man in the 1720s, so he had practical experience of most of the ways in which the middle and upper classes were educated at that time.\textsuperscript{34}

At the end of his twenty-five years' experience, Turnbull published a book on his philosophy

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid. p.124
\textsuperscript{34} M.A.Stewart, ‘George Turnbull and educational reform’ in J. J. Carter and J. H. Pittock (eds.)\textit{Aberdeen and the Enlightenment}, (Aberdeen 1987) pp. 95–103
of liberal education. Turnbull's system of liberal education, and his thoughtful account of how history and fits into the overall scheme, have been major inspirations for this thesis. It is not so big a book as Knox's, nor was it so popular, though it did eventually go into a second edition. A central theme of the work is that the one thing it is essential to teach children, once they can read, write and add up, is history. History, Turnbull says, is the beginning of the study of moral philosophy; of primary philosophy; of logic, oratory, natural law, civil law, natural theology, revealed theology – in short 'every science requires a prior acquaintance with the History of Mankind', save natural philosophy, which is based on reason and experiment and should be learned in a more systematic manner, and languages. Even then, history helps us understand the development of the one and enjoy studying the other.

Turnbull recommends no particular books, but he does recommend an approach, which is basically to work through all of European history from Ancient Greece down to the present day over several years. The vast majority of the examples he uses, however, are from the ancient world, whether books, success stories of liberally-educated statesmen or examples of significant historical moments. Whenever, in the course of discussing a particular society, any of the subjects above come up, Turnbull says there should be digressions to cover the basics of those subjects; reading history will 'give occasion to point out the origin, rise and improvement of all arts, and consequently of trying different geniuses [i.e. talents or interests] and inviting them to discover and exert themselves.' The continuous outline course of universal history lasting months or years was common in the Dutch universities and in the process of being adopted by many, even most, professors of modern history in universities. Whilst Turnbull was educated entirely in Scotland, he did make extended visits to the Dutch universities as private tutor to a succession of young Scotsmen on their Grand Tours.

As well as the authority of the admired Dutch system, the structure was easily adapted to a lecture course; see for example the lectures of Smyth, Mackie or Tytler discussed in Chapters 4 and 6. After such a course, students would be fit to pursue whichever of those secondary subjects they or their guardians thought important, perhaps at university level. And whilst students would have been picking up the basics of the rest of the humanities along the way, history also 'teaches wherein true merit consists, viz. in wisdom and virtue.'

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35 G. Turnbull, *Observations upon liberal education* (London 1742)
36 Ibid. pp.372-4 and 378-83
37 Ibid. p.398
39 Turnbull, *Observations upon liberal education* p.16
It would be interesting to know if Turnbull's ideas were put into practice in a school or university setting, in any of the various places he taught over his career. He points out that to do this with any success requires a class, so students can inspire each other to emulation, be exercised against one another in debating, and so on. However, it must be a small class, so that the tutor can know his students and how best to engage each individual. Economically speaking, this is suboptimal; small classes cost just as much to teach as large ones. It might, however, have been more feasible as a private tutoring arrangement for a large family, or several families clubbing together – we know Turnbull worked as a tutor on several occasions and perhaps this book is based on his practical experiences. He rhetorically admits in the preface that he is inadequate to the task of delivering such a course as it ought to be delivered, and puts the arguments in its favour into the mouth of Socrates in an invented Socratic dialogue with 'Ctesicles'.

Turnbull's view of Liberal Education, then, is considerably more radical in its difference from the 'standard' middle- and upper-class education than Knox's, and less practical to offer in school – though we should remember that Knox too is talking more about private tuition than schools, of which he has almost as low an opinion as he does of Oxford. However, they both associate the study of history with making the young man into both a good citizen and 'a gentleman'. Even if these high ideals were rarely attained in practice, they give us an idea of how central ancient history could be to thinking about education, and the ways in which that teaching which did take place was thought about and fitted in to largely unwritten systems of pedagogy.

The association between talking about liberal education and building gentlemen is important. The eighteenth century saw a steady inflation of the title of 'gent'. We can see it, for example, in admissions to the Universities.40 It used to be thought that a major reason for the relative decline of Oxford, Cambridge and Trinity Dublin in the mid-eighteenth century was an influx of upper-class louts who were not there to work. In fact, the proportion of genuinely well-off students increased only because there was a decline in overall numbers. The absolute number of 'gentlemen' or 'gentlemen's sons' went up because students who a century earlier would not have claimed that status increasingly did so. It does not seem coincidental that as educationalists, schools and universities started to talk more about an education that made one

40 Stone 'The Oxford Student Body' pp.48-9
fit to be a gentleman, people were more willing to claim that title once they had received the education.\textsuperscript{41}

The 'liberal education' was resurrected and popularised as a defence of the English universities in the 1810s, principally by Edward Copleston in resistance to criticisms of Oxford by the \textit{Edinburgh Review}.\textsuperscript{42} Copleston's liberal education was more detached from daily life and practical concerns than Knox's or Turnbull's; the value of classics and mathematics lay in their difficulty, discipline, and ultimate uselessness. Studying things because they were obscure would cultivate the mental flexibility and ability to master new material which would be far more important in the unstable, rapidly-changing world of the new nineteenth century than a curriculum constantly chasing 'relevance' and inevitably years behind the times. However, for all its novelty this is still recognisably the same use of 'liberal education' as Knox and especially Turnbull; the training which confers the skills to excel in all other fields. When Paul Slee said the concept of liberal education was developed to justify rather than guide practice, he may not be wrong, but the development is rather older than his suggested date of 1800-20.\textsuperscript{43}

\subsection*{1.4 Universities in the Eighteenth Century – a brief overview}

The traditional view of the eighteenth-century universities in the British Isles has, in its crudest form, Oxford and Cambridge 'steeped in port and prejudice' as Gibbon famously described them, declining into a national irrelevance, whilst Glasgow and Edinburgh invented the modern university according to the latest ideas of the Scottish Enlightenment, Aberdeen produced interesting if ultimately unrewarding philosophers, and St Andrews and Trinity College Dublin are largely neglected. Kearney's \textit{Scholars and Gentlemen}, a study of students and study in the seventeenth century, skips the eighteenth entirely to end with a coda on the Victorian university and reforms thereof, as if the intervening period had meant, and changed, little.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{41} H.F.Kearney, \textit{Scholars and gentlemen: universities and society in pre-industrial Britain, 1500-1700} (London, 1970) pp.24-7
\textsuperscript{42} E.Copleston, \textit{Three replies to the calumnies of the Edinburgh review against Oxford} (first published London 1810-12, facsimile ed. Bristol 2001)
\textsuperscript{44} Kearney, \textit{Scholars and gentlemen} epilogue.
The last twenty-five years have seen considerable revision of perceptions of decline and inactivity in England's universities; whilst they were, on a university level, antiquated, and many of the seventeenth-century university institutions fell into decline, the centrality of colleges to student life was never greater, and there was great variation in subjects and levels of teaching, learning and research between colleges, and within colleges across even quite short periods of time. One senior tutor or head of house could make the reputation of a college and buck the general trend of declining numbers and academic standards.45

The modern history of Oxford in the long eighteenth century begins with Dame Lucy Sutherland, L.S. Mitchell, and Lawrence Stone. The former pair edited the eighteenth-century volume of the The History of the University of Oxford; the latter produced in the 1970s the first attempt at quantifying an account of the 'unreformed' universities, relying on prosopography and statistical analysis rather than the entertaining but relatively uninformative collections of shocking anecdotes of bibulous decay popularised in the nineteenth century and found in popular but seriously-intended works such as Scholae Academicae. The latter would have prefigured much of this work over a century earlier, had it not been written with the apparent goal of exalting its author's university (Cambridge) and college (Trinity) at the expense of critics, Oxford, and the rest of the country.46 The same attitudes appear even in older scholarly histories such as Mallet, who called the University of the eighteenth century:

[A] world of drab ideals, a small society where disillusioned Jacobites and half-hearted Hanoverians contended ... where scholars disinclined for study encountered teachers as indifferent as themselves, where dreamers found enthusiasm discouraged, education deadened, endowments ill-applied. The Gentleman Commoner with his resounding humours possessed the courts where Wyclif and the Schoolmen had debated ... many a habit had to change, and many a stubborn prejudice be defeated.47

These authors have done much to dispel the idea of the 'dark age' of the English university, which nonetheless persists in a slightly modified form, for example, R.D.Anderson's brusque dismissal as recently as 2006; young gentlemen went to Oxford and Cambridge 'to fraternize with their peers, make useful contacts, acquire a classical veneer ... and fit themselves for

45 See especially R.Darwall-Smith, A History of University College, Oxford (Oxford 2008) for a particularly chequered academic record, where one staff member was frequently the difference between a very high and a very low reputation.

46 C.Wordsworth, Scholae Academicae: Studies in the English Universities in the 18th Century (Cambridge 1877)

47 C.E.Mallet, A History of the University of Oxford (3vols, London 1927) iii 3
public life'.

Even Anderson does note that a 'classical veneer' is part of that process, and what he seems to mean is a nodding acquaintance, if shallow and rootless, with the culture of the ancient world, which would entail some historical understanding.

Those motivations for attending a university do not necessarily demonstrate a lowering of academic standards; they would be entirely familiar to a seventeen-year-old Cambridge applicant today. Indeed, the question of how exactly the universities 'fit [their students] for public life' is central to this piece, and seems to have been previously taken rather for granted as some nebulous process of acculturation which happened largely outside, or even in opposition to, academic study.

Much of the bad press the Oxford of the eighteenth century has suffered derives from the fact that the colleges were more independent of the central university than they had been for centuries, or have ever been since. Historians of the University or the Colleges tend to keep to their province; Sutherland and Mitchell could only cover the twenty-odd colleges, or even generalise among them, in the vaguest fashion. Moreover, many (though by no means all) college histories take little account of the wider university, much less the national, Anglosphere or European scale, or of how their particular subject fits into the whole. Although several college histories, in particular the recent and substantial volumes on University College, Magdalen and Christ Church, make strenuous efforts to cover all periods of their respective institutional histories, they often lack a broad readership among scholars, perceived as being targeted at a less academic audience of alumni. Many older works tend to gloss over periods considered relatively 'inglorious' or 'backward' in favour of Great Men and Significant Movements, or neglect student and tutor experiences in favour of famous alumni and Fellows.

The history of Cambridge fits less naturally into a 'long eighteenth century', as may be seen from the fact that the History of Cambridge University has the break between volumes 2 and 3 in the 1740s; the introduction of the Tripos examination in that decade may be taken as, in some sense, the beginning of the modern university, though in many other respects the

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50 This was particularly an issue of the 'Robinson' (after their publisher) series of college histories produced around 1900, which covered every college at Oxford and Cambridge, with varying success.
weakness of the central university and the variability in academic standards were no different to contemporary Oxford.\textsuperscript{51} C.H. Winstanley's older work \textit{Unreformed Cambridge} takes a very extended eighteenth century as the 'Dark Age of our University', tracing meaningful modernisation to the 1820s and -30s.\textsuperscript{52}

Trinity College Dublin has been blessed in relatively recent years with two major histories: MacDowell and Webb in honour of the quadricentennial of the College in the 1980s, and the slightly more recent and slimmer \textit{Trinity College Dublin: The First 400 Years}.\textsuperscript{53} The former is particularly interesting; its subtitle 'an Academic History' reflects an unusually close focus on the student experience and the curriculum followed; destinations of graduates and backgrounds of students are covered in detail, and their evolutions closely traced, while relatively less attention is paid to celebrity associations or the material culture of the College.

Edinburgh and Glasgow may in several senses be taken together. They were the great success stories of British academe well into the nineteenth century, and their collective influence on higher education around the world, particularly via the USA, has been immeasurable.\textsuperscript{54} The very concept of the 'liberal arts' or 'general' degree, as it is studied today in the US, Australasia and elsewhere is based on Scottish practice which remained current there from the 1750s to the 1950s. This connection was popularised by G.S.Pryde in the 1950s and may be easily seen in any history of an eighteenth-century colonial college, almost all of which were founded or presided over early in their histories by men educated at the ancient Scottish universities, and which in many cases explicitly drew their curricula from their leader's \textit{alma mater}.\textsuperscript{55}

The history of the Scottish Enlightenment is of course a vast topic which has taken in the contribution of the universities to the 'public sphere' of the cities, and of individual professors to various aspects of philosophy and culture, not least the foundation of the whole discipline of economics by professors of Moral Philosophy. To enumerate these in detail would be tedious, but Nicholas Phillipson's article 'Edinburgh and the Scottish Enlightenment' is a fine

\textsuperscript{52} D.A.Winstanley, \textit{Unreformed Cambridge: a study of certain aspects of the university in the eighteenth century} (Cambridge 1935)
\textsuperscript{53} R.B.McDowell & D.A.Webb, \textit{Trinity College Dublin: An Academic History} (Dublin 1988); J.V.Luce, \textit{Trinity College Dublin: The First 400 Years} (Dublin, 1992)
\textsuperscript{54} See for example N.Phillipson, 'Introduction' in N.Phillipson (ed.), \textit{Universities, Society and the Future} (Edinburgh 1983)
\textsuperscript{55} G.S.Pryde, \textit{The Scottish Universities and the Colleges of Colonial America} (Glasgow 1957)
example of placing these institutions in that larger context.\textsuperscript{56} Hammerstein's article in the *History of the University in Europe* also emphasises the practicality and modernity of the Scottish universities, the focus of their curriculum not on erudition but on 'moral and practical training directed towards promoting the welfare of the community [and] the practical affairs of daily life,' though the intended recipients of such training remained (in the majority) preachers and teachers.\textsuperscript{57} This last is something often neglected in the attention paid to newer types of students; urban intellectuals attending one particular course of lectures, or merchants' sons cherry-picking the most 'useful' aspects of the curriculum for a year or two were still probably outnumbered by prospective ministers and schoolmasters.\textsuperscript{58}

However, possibly because these ways of understanding the Scottish universities have been so fruitful, there has never been a really comprehensive modern history of either Glasgow or Edinburgh as an institution of education. D.B. Horn's history of Edinburgh, expanded from his short introductory monograph, was in preparation when he died suddenly in 1971; however, this thesis has drawn heavily on his unpublished papers at Edinburgh University. Glasgow has had in the modern era only *Who, where and when: the history & constitution of the University of Glasgow*, which is rather narrowly concerned with administrative history, slightly longer but heavily biased towards its earlier days.\textsuperscript{59} In both cases, more substantial multi-volume histories from the late nineteenth century continue to be hugely valuable sources, including reproductions of primary documents which do not survive elsewhere.\textsuperscript{60}

The exception to this relative dearth of scholarship is Aberdeen, where a profusion of material was produced as part of the quincentennial celebrations of King's College (the elder of the two original Aberdeen universities) in the early 1990s. Two of these dealt specifically with the eighteenth century; Paul Wood's study of the curriculum at Aberdeen, and Colin McLaren on *Aberdeen Students, 1600-1860*.\textsuperscript{61} The latter volume is particularly relevant to this study because it focuses not on intellectual movements among the staff, but upon the teaching given

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{56} N.Phillipson, 'Edinburgh and the Scottish Enlightenment' in L.Stone (ed.) *The University in Society* (2vols, Princeton, NJ 1971) ii 407-448
\item \textsuperscript{57} N.Hammerstein, 'Relations with authority' in H. de Ridder-Symoens (ed.), *History of the University in Europe Volume II (1500-1800)* (Cambridge 1996) p.139
\item \textsuperscript{58} C.A.McLaren, *Aberdeen Students 1600-1860* (Aberdeen 2005) pp.60 (gentry and merchants); 85 (prospective divines)
\item \textsuperscript{59} M.S. Moss, M.Rankin and L.Richmond, *Who, where and when: the history & constitution of the University of Glasgow* (Glasgow 2001)
\item \textsuperscript{60} A.Grant, *The Story of the University of Edinburgh during its first 300 years* (2vols, London 1884); D.Murray, *Memories of the old College of Glasgow; some chapters in the history of the university* (Glasgow 1927)
\end{itemize}
to the students and their experience of the university. McLaren presents a detailed study of students at both King's and Marischal Colleges, concluding that in contrast to the two big urban universities, Aberdeen remained largely though no longer, as it had been in the seventeenth century, almost exclusively, a local university. It is more correct to say 'universities', with Marischal College principally serving the city and a few students from further afield. However, those from outside Scotland, such as diarist George Colman, were rare enough to be remarkable. King's College meanwhile served the rural areas of the North-East. Despite merger schemes dating back to at least the reign of Charles I the universities of Aberdeen were not finally merged until 1856. The efflorescence of moral philosophers and rhetoricians of the 'Common Sense' school did not lead to a great change in the size or composition of the student body such as occurred at the other institutions similarly blessed, reinforcing (though McLaren does not go far into this) the importance of the urban context to the success of Edinburgh and Glasgow.62

Two foreign comparators may prove interesting and instructive to set against the British experience of history and classicism in universities. The American colonies have already been alluded to. Their colleges, inspired by Scottish models, were the seat of a vigorous and occasionally bruising debate about what purpose classics and history were to serve in the brave new world of the American Revolution and Republic. Benjamin Rush set himself entirely against classicism in colleges, arguing that Latin and Greek could not make men good and did not make them clever; his replacement proposal would be exclusively modern and largely practical, with heavy doses of geometry, natural philosophy and ethics.63 However, a more interesting strand of critique argued that the useful part of classics was ancient history and philosophy, and attacked the weight of time and attention given to the finer points of dead languages, beyond that necessary to construe ancient texts. This view is particularly associated with Nisbet, President of Dickinson College 1785-1804, who wrote that exclusive concentration on language was creating 'a nation of quacks' who needed more ancient culture and less focus on the grammar and metre of Homer.64

The other, rather nearer and older university system of particular relevance is that of the

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62 McLaren, *Aberdeen Students* pp.62-70
63 B.Rush, *A plan for the establishment of public schools and the diffusion of knowledge in Pennsylvania: to which are added thoughts upon the mode of education, proper in a republic* (Philadelphia, PA 1786)
Netherlands. Dutch universities were, until the flowering of Edinburgh and Glasgow, the main Continental point of contact for Scottish scholars with the 'Republic of Letters', and those universities were particularly notable for the depth and range of their teaching of history, both ancient and modern. Among the many British public figures to spend time as a student at Leiden was John Wilkes, whose use of ancient history as a political journalist and politician is discussed in Chapters 10 and 11.

Furthermore, Charles Mackie, the first Professor of History in a Scottish university (Edinburgh) was educated at Groningen and Leiden, and retained close links to both throughout his career. Utrecht and Leiden both had multiple courses and professors of history. As a rule, they were dominated by teaching of what Joanna Roelevink has called 'critical polyhistory', a survival, with increased rigour, of the universal historians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Whilst challenged by Enlightenment ideas of philosophic history, this manner of organising material lent itself to teaching by an extended course of lectures (in some cases extended to several years of four hours a week), and served propaedeutic purposes for several higher subjects. It was this tradition that led to the establishment of chairs of 'Universal or Civil History' at Scottish universities – which was made explicit in the foundation of an Edinburgh Chair 'as there are in the universities beyond the seas' – the overseas universities that would have been, by far, most familiar to Scots would be those of the Netherlands and particularly Leiden. Charles Mackie's Universal History lectures were very much in that tradition and owed much to equivalent courses at Leiden; he used the same main textbooks as were in use at Dutch universities for both his Universal History and Roman Antiquities courses.

For lawyers, the range of societies and legalconstitutional traditions explored along the way – Roman, pan-European and Dutch – was useful to understand the various sources of Dutch law and the context of old precedents and treatises. Lawyers needed an understanding not just of the history of their own society, but of that of the whole of Europe to really master the civil law, to understand the circumstances in which various parts of it had developed – a pressure that did not exist to the same degree in England, where the civil law was much less important,

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67 Mijers, Republick of Letters pp.156-8
but did to some extent in Scotland. The Scottish Faculty of Advocates and the professors of law in the universities were among the driving forces behind the growth in history teaching in the eighteenth century.

For diplomats and politicians the focus on cause and effect was obviously appealing, promising an understanding of the potential consequences of present actions. Prospective theologians needed both of these, as well as the support of critical historical and philological authority for scriptural authenticity. In a very formalised system of educational progression, history sat at the base of a branching tree of studies, built into the foundations of all the higher faculties save medicine. Scotland and England did not have the same system of progression, save in the most rudimentary form, but the same utilitarian advantages could certainly be proposed for history, and were, especially in proposals for reformation which would make the British university more disciplined and its curricula more rational. Arguments such as these for ancient history as a foundation to other learning recur frequently in the chapters dealing with teaching at particular British universities.

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68 Ibid. p.157
Chapter Two – Ancient History in Schools and for Schoolboys

Before moving on to the status of ancient history in a university setting, it is helpful to consider what sort of historical knowledge students could be expected to have before they got to university. Obviously, if students studied Latin in school, which anyone with ambitions to go to university would have to do, or with a private tutor, they would come out having picked up at least odd bits of ancient history. However, the classical curriculum could be, and usually was, very much focused on language skills (even more so than at university level), with authors more often than not read in disconnected extracts based on their use of interesting or appropriately challenging language, rather than historical interest.69

This may also be a useful place to consider the teaching of Latin and Greek language to schoolboys in general terms. Competence in reading and writing Latin was considered a basic standard for university study across Britain; although there was no formal entrance examination it was impossible to access lectures and examinations delivered in Latin without a reasonable level of competence. English lectures first begin to appear across the British universities in the 1770s, but examinations remained in Latin until after the turn of the century.

The situation of Greek is more complex. In England, some knowledge of Greek (though perhaps not very advanced) could be assumed in university matriculands, certainly by the middle of the century. The typical grammar school began to teach Greek in the fifth form, though always secondarily to Latin, so by the time of attending university a boy who had been to a good grammar school would have studied Greek, by modern standards quite intensively, for two or three years. By the end of the century this would have included reading a little Greek drama; earlier it would be more likely to be just Homer and some minor lyric poets.70

In Ireland until the 1720s, Greek beyond the very basics was not even expected of undergraduates at Trinity (being reserved by the Laudian statutes to the MA course). However, by the time the Principal wrote to the schoolmasters of Ireland in 1754 to recommend reading for prospective students, there was an expectation they should have some Greek grammar, and the classical reading lists begin to show Greek authors in the 1730s.71

This improvement in the standard of Greek across England and Ireland greatly expanded the

69 Clarke, Classical Education p.57
70 Ibid. pp.51-3
71 Trinity College Dublin Muniments MUN/V/27/2, non-paginated loose letter inserted in back of volume.
range of ancient historians that could be read, as many of the more difficult Greek authors became more widely accessible. However, the expansion of Greek, especially Greek verse, in a curriculum previously devoted almost entirely to Latin may have tended to squeeze out Latin historians, as we can see occurred to some extent at Trinity College Dublin (see pp.95-8).

Scottish grammar schools, on the other hand, were technically forbidden to teach Greek at all in order to preserve a monopoly on that work for the universities, which gave introductory Greek classes to new students, often occupying up to a year of study. Although we know students, mostly English, were permitted to omit this year if they already knew Greek, the expectation that they would come to it for the first time at university obviously limited the range and complexity of authors with whom they could be expected to engage.\(^\text{72}\)

Scottish matriculands were also younger than English or Irish by, on average two to three years, aged around 15 typically compared to 18 in England, where poorer students tended to be older, and gentlemen's sons slightly younger. Across Britain there were extreme cases of students as young as 11, but these were recognised as both exceptional and undesirable.\(^\text{73}\) The Scots, therefore, could be expected to have a lower level of Latin as well as Greek, if only because they had had two to three years less to study. 'First Humanity' classes at Scottish universities often involved teaching fairly basic Latin grammar to new students.\(^\text{74}\)

Students' historical studies may be considered in two parts. First, whatever was directly taught in schools. That is certainly not a great deal – authors writing on the whole breadth of eighteenth-century education have not been missing a grand historicising movement – but a corrective is needed to the view that history was hardly ever taught \textit{per se} in a school setting before the mid-nineteenth century.

At the same time, the eighteenth century saw a growing cottage industry of vernacular histories, initially aimed at young boys as a companion to their academic education. The first three narrative works of specifically Roman history in English were all written for schoolboys in the 1690s – two by Laurence Eachard covering the Roman Republic and Principate

\(^{72}\) Wood, \textit{Aberdeen Curriculum} p.55
\(^{73}\) McLaren, \textit{Aberdeen Students} pp.121-2; Jeremy Bentham famously matriculated at Queen's College, Oxford aged 12.
\(^{74}\) McLaren, \textit{Aberdeen Students} p.69
respectively (later considered the first two volumes of a unified Roman history), and one by William Wotton dealing with the period from c.140-230AD. By 1800, dozens of such works could be found, ranging from fifty-page introductions to ancient history for small children, to purpose-written school textbooks. Some of these are considered in detail in the second part of this chapter.

British schools can be divided essentially into three types which we might find offering history along with the rest of their curriculum: the so-called 'old' grammar schools; the new, mostly non-endowed 'academies'; and the dissenting academies. We can more or less ignore the elementary schools, which taught largely 'the three R's', and also the new technical schools which specialised in turning out navigators, military engineers, book-keepers and other such highly skilled tradesmen.

In many ways, the dissenting academies were more like universities than schools. They existed primarily (though by no means exclusively) to train ministers, they took students at a similar age to the Scottish universities, though somewhat younger than Oxford or Cambridge, and several of the more notable ones taught subjects, such as moral philosophy and natural science, that are seldom if ever found in other schools. The whole subject of the Dissenting curriculum is certainly deserving of attention, but a chapter of the History of the Dissenting Academies in England, imminently forthcoming from Cambridge University Press, will specifically address the teaching of history. As in other areas, the teaching of history by Joseph Priestley or Caleb Ashworth has more in common with universities, particularly those in Scotland, than with any non-Dissenting school. However, comprehensive study of these as an important part of the history of British education is being carried out elsewhere and is thus largely omitted here.

There is, or rather was as it seems to have died down in recent years, a great deal of debate about how many grammar schools remained operational through the eighteenth century. On the one hand, Jonathan Gathorne-Harvey reckons the total at no more than 100 still functioning by 1800, down from around 800 which were founded between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries. On the other, R.S.Tompson put the same figure at no lower than 400.

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75 For the contents of this forthcoming collection see http://www.qmulreligionandliterature.co.uk/research/the-dissenting-academies-project/history-of-the-dissenting-academies/ (retrieved 21st August 2016)
perhaps as high as 500. A lot of the debate centres on what constitutes a 'grammar school'. Does it, for example, have to have taught exclusively classical subjects? Tompson defines a grammar school as any school endowed to teach Latin which was still teaching at all, as it is very difficult to know what was taught at any given time. Most schools had one or two staff, who taught what they knew, or liked, or felt like, as long as it satisfied the local parents enough to keep paying, so there was certainly tremendous variation. At one end of the scale of size and prestige, Eton and Westminister each averaged several hundred pupils from across Britain in the eighteenth century, including peers' and prime ministers' sons; at the other, Yorkshire alone was reckoned in 1818 to have over 30 grammar schools where there was not a single pupil enrolled and the endowment income was simply pocketed by the masters and governors.

The term 'public school' began in the eighteenth century to be used to describe schools with a national reputation and catchment, but Gathorne-Harvey argues that only two schools – Eton and Westminister – consistently met that definition before the nineteenth century, with Winchester a debatable third, though others had periods of fashionability and high repute. As their curricula do not appear to have been vastly different from other good grammar schools, Eton and Westminister are considered in that category.

Yet all these schools had in common a very similar basic curriculum. Almost all used the same two textbooks for the first few years; *Lily's Grammar* (written for school use by the first High Master of St Paul's in the early 16th century) and the *Scriptora Minora*, a selection of short and relatively straightforward Latin verse. In almost all these schools pupils studied Latin grammar, almost exclusively, for about three years, then began Greek alongside study of actual Latin authors. The fashion of the period ran heavily towards verse, but historians including Livy, Sallust and Velleius Paterculus were very commonly read as well. The curriculum, often set down by the school's founding statutes, had little flexibility; in theory, alteration required an Act of Parliament.

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77 R.S. Tompson, *Classics or Charity? The dilemma of the eighteenth-century grammar school* (Manchester 1971) p.17
78 Ibid. p.7
79 Ibid. p.50
80 Gathorne-Hardy, *Public School Phenomenon* p.50
81 Ibid. p.17, the same emerges from the statistical analysis in N. Hans, *New Trends in Education in the Eighteenth Century* (London 1951) pp.17-21
82 Clarke, *Classical Education* pp.50-2
However, one important book from the seventeenth century gives us a sense of how broad a 'purely classical' education could be in practice. Charles Hoole, the headmaster of Lothbury School in the mid-to-late seventeenth century, wrote a treatise entitled 'New discovery of the old art of teaching school' in which he gave recommendations for the setting, writing and marking of Themes (Latin and English essays). Students, he said, should be encouraged to read widely in histories and antiquities to be able to comment intelligently, both in style and content on a wide range of topics.83 A similar approach to the setting of themes is evident in a letter home by an Eton boy in 1697, requesting a copy of Raleigh's History to aid in writing themes. These together suggest that if not common, the writing of themes on historical topics was not unusual – though in the latter case the official historian of Eton finds the request odd and suggests that perhaps the boy in question was trying to elicit an expensive book from his parents by claiming it was necessary to his studies!84

In the 1720s, John Clarke, headmaster of Hull Grammar School, wrote two essays on practical education, calling on grammar school masters to introduce other subjects to support classical learning, especially history, chronology and geography. 'It is not bare Latin and Greek that a boy should spend all his time on in school' as history especially is of at least equal value; it ought to be 'the constant study of a Gentleman', still more so for anyone destined for public office, as it broadens the mind to consider other points of view, experiences and situations.85 If in support of a classical education, it is reasonable to suppose that the history in question was intended to be largely ancient history. Within the format of the grammar school, therefore, it would be possible to make the education both more useful and more interesting. Clarke argued that twelve-year-old boys can understand Cornelius Nepos, or even Livy, but even if they can manage Ovid's Latin are unlikely to have the facility to really appreciate poetry. He produced annotated editions of classical authors to help with this approach to teaching, some of which are discussed below.86

Later in the century the place of history in the grammar school becomes clearer. Tompson's book includes a table of alterations publicly made to the subjects taught at the various grammar schools he studied, and he finds one which in the early 1790s began to teach history

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83 C.Hoole, A New Discovery of the Old Art of Teaching Schoole (London 1661) §4 p.31
84 T.Card, Eton Established 1440-1860 (London 2001) p.72
85 J.Clarke, An Essay Upon the Education of Youth in Grammar Schools (London 1720) p.5; see also J.Clarke, Essay on Study (London 1731)
86 See below p.33
of some kind as an official part of its curriculum. Sadly he does not name it and I have found no such evidence; it cannot be St Paul's or Shrewsbury, as he explicitly if anachronistically excludes the 'Nine Public Schools' from his study. Also at around that time, Samuel Butler at Shrewsbury, which had not previously been considered a first-rate school, began to improve the standard of classical scholarship, which explicitly included introducing the teaching of ancient history.\textsuperscript{87} Butler remarked in an anonymous pamphlet attacking the narrowness of the Classics teaching at Cambridge that without ancient history and philosophy, Classics 'loses those fields which afford more improvement to the taste, more exercise for reflexion, more dignity to the conceptions and enlargement to the understanding of the student than all the Greek tragedies that were ever performed.'\textsuperscript{88} In other words, what is important in the Classics is not Latin and Greek language, but the ability to understand the ancient world and its societies.

Shrewsbury, although the best known school to introduce this sort of very moderate, conservative modernisation, was by no means the only one. Rugby from perhaps as early as 1780, certainly from the early 1790s, had timetabled History lessons; one morning a week the Headmaster, Thomas James, taught Scriptural, Roman and English History in rotation, so students covered all three in the course of those 2 years.\textsuperscript{89} The textbook he used for Roman history was Oliver Goldsmith's abbreviation of his own \textit{Roman History}, which was published specifically, says its preface, for the use of schools – clearly there were other schools teaching ancient history, the details of which are now unknown.\textsuperscript{90} This appears, incidentally, to be the first time a grammar school taught English history, and the only instance of which we are aware for a considerable period after.

The loose term 'Academy' is used, inconsistently in contemporary sources and more regularly by modern authors, to denote any new school offering any kind of higher learning, i.e. much more than the Three Rs. Nicholas Hans divided them into 'classical' and 'modern' academies, and many authors treat the former as basically identical to grammar schools, distinguished only by being newer and, because they relied on fees as their only source of income, far less permanent.\textsuperscript{91} The latter offered any combination of 'modern', more utilitarian subjects, some

\textsuperscript{87} J.B.Oldham, \textit{A History of Shrewsbury School} (London 1952) pp.92, 108  
\textsuperscript{88} Ibid. p.94  
\textsuperscript{89} W.H.D.Rouse, \textit{History of Rugby School} (London 1898) p.137  
\textsuperscript{90} O.Goldsmith, \textit{Dr Goldsmith's Roman History, Abridged by Himself for the Use of Schools} (London 1782) n.p. (preface)  
\textsuperscript{91} Hans, \textit{New Trends in Education} p.63
intended as vocational training, some offering a liberal education; the classical academies as
the name suggests offered Latin and perhaps Greek, but in an attempt to differentiate
themselves from the true grammar schools many offered some of the more academic modern
subjects as well, such as modern languages, geography and history. This made them useful,
ot only for vocational training in careers such as navigation or pharmacy, but also for
preparation for university entrance and careers in the Church.

A good example of the classical academy is the school briefly set up at Edial Hall by Samuel
Johnson from 1735-7.\textsuperscript{92} It was always intended to be a small institution, appealing to a better
class of pupil than most such schools by the quality of the teaching. Johnson intended to
follow the methods set down by Clarke and used several of his books, including his facing-
page English/Latin edition of Cornelius Nepos. An outline of his intended curriculum was
published in the \textit{Gentleman's Magazine} after his death, by a friend to whom he had sent it,
and it follows Clarke's advice closely.\textsuperscript{93} Edial Hall is sometimes referred to as a grammar
school on the basis of its classical curriculum; the strict definition that a grammar school must
be an endowed school was not universally applied.

The difference between a classical and a modern academy is clear from the curriculum of an
example of the latter, such as the Bath Academy in the 1760s. This offered, or rather
promised, straight-through education from little more than elementary level (the very
beginnings of Latin) to what would normally be university-level.\textsuperscript{94} Among two 'additional
studies' in every school year, modern history and ancient history appear twice each, so
students would have had an afternoon or two a week for four years of history of one kind or
another. However, the Bath curriculum promises a lot that I cannot imagine was ever
delivered. One of the 'primary studies' was for the seventh class (of ten) in 'the rudiments of
Anatomy and Surgery.' One might teach a class of fourteen-year-olds Anatomy, but Surgery
even in the primitive form it took in the 1760s seems to be carrying ambition rather too far. 'A
constant course of Natural Philosophy with Experiments' seems less implausible, but still a
stretch for a new venture. How far the ambitious, ten-year-long education offered by Bath
Academy was ever put into practice is unclear, but the ambition to do so, and to put history in
a fairly prominent place (4 out of about 35-40 'subject slots'; plus one each for chronology and

\textsuperscript{92} Discussed at length by C.D.Dille, \textit{Samuel Johnson and Eighteenth Century Education} (Oxford DPhil thesis 2001)
\textsuperscript{93} Quoted extensively, ibid. pp.108-10
\textsuperscript{94} This prospectus is reproduced by Hans, \textit{New Trends} pp.80-1
'sacred history and Jewish Antiquities') is interesting. Even in a system which expressly
denied the importance of ancient languages, ancient history could still be taught in a variety of
contexts.

Overall, then, we see little history taught as such in schools, whether endowed or new,
classical or more modern. However, there is certainly evidence for a willingness on the part of
some grammar school masters to expand upon the definition of 'classics' to include at least a
little of what might be called Antiquities, i.e. cultural history, alongside pure grammar. This is
limited, and evidence (as for almost all teaching in this period) is extremely patchy. We know
of many instances of teaching beyond Latin grammar from single, chance references, and
know nothing at all about the teaching at many smaller schools. However, if the boys of the
eighteenth century were probably not being taught history, they were considerably more likely
to be reading it, and it is to their reading matter that we now turn.

Ancient History in Children's Books

Having surveyed the climate in schools, the other side of schoolboys' introduction to history,
and by far the more important, would come in their private reading. It is quite possible to
argue that the writing of ancient history in English begins with texts for schoolboys. The very
first such original work (i.e. not a translation and commentary) was a translation from the
French of the Abbé de Fourcroy by a hack writer called Thomas Brown in about 1696 (the
original is dated 1694).95 This is a very basic introduction to Roman history; 272 pages in a
tiny duodecimo format and large print to cover everything from the foundation of the city
down to the fall of the Western Roman Empire in 476 AD – that is, about 1220 years, or a
decade to every double-page spread.

The intended readership is clear from the original dedication, which Brown translates, and
from his own preface. The original was written for the use of the infant Duke of Burgundy,
second in line to the French throne. Brown talks about how he hopes his work, which is
considerably expanded from the original and features an appendix on Roman antiquities, will
be useful to gentlemen looking to mend their lack of classical education, as well as to children
just starting out. He acknowledges that some readers will use his work 'as a crutch; to furnish

95 De Fourcroy, A New and Easy Method to Understand the Roman History trans. T.Brown (London 1697) – the
copy in the Bodleian is erroneously dated 1617 on the flyleaf, but the correct date is appended to the preface.
enough matter for common Conversation, and by this means be hindered from making a thorough Progress in Learning’, but says that because of all the new fields of learning occupying people's time, some abridgement of a topic as important and weighty as Roman history is required.\(^96\)

The relative originality of Brown and Fourcroy's work is clear from the fact that he feels the need to include a lengthy defence of the practice of abridging full-length works of history. Abridgement, he says, is blamed for the neglect of original and substantial works; would all of Livy’s 168 books have survived had successive generations not relied on 'Florus' breviary'? Brown's answer is a firm 'no' - the loss of ancient texts can be explained by many other means – but the fact he feels the need to deflect objections reflects his awareness that he is doing something new, 'the first production of this kind that ever appeared in English'.

Fourcroy's style is that of a question-and-answer; not a true dialogue in the Socratic manner, but more that of a catechism, or an examiner probing his student's memory. The bulk of the work consists of a leading figure, or for the later period emperor, and answers to the questions, 'of what descent was he?', 'what was his character?', 'what were the principal events of his Time?' and 'what eminent men lived in his Time?'. The last 50 pages address various aspects of Roman society and especially religion in the same fashion. This manner was sufficiently popular that Brown's translation went through six editions over thirty-five years. Its continuing success is further demonstrated by the fact that Richard Lockman produced a replacement volume in the same style in 1737.\(^97\) This retained the question and answer style, but was over twice as long, integrated 'antiquities' with the narrative and covered only the Republican period, that is the first 722 years of Rome's existence down to the battle of Actium. This stopping point is justified as being the end of the 'most valorous and free-spirited' period of Roman history, but the Empire is presented as a worthwhile successor and subject of study, being more polite, sociable, peaceful and literary – perhaps more like England of the 1730s.\(^98\)

Lockman justifies the need for the new work on two grounds: that the new histories such as that by Charles Rollin are far too long to expect active youths to sit and read them, and that Brown is conversely both too superficial and out of date; Montesquieu and Rollin have

\(^{96}\) Ibid. n.p. (preface)
\(^{97}\) R.Lockman, New Roman History by Question and Answer (London 1737)
\(^{98}\) Ibid. p.401
rendered parts of his narrative obsolete. The 'advertisement' at the start of the book specifically recommends it not just to individual youths and to tutors, but 'for the use of schools'. I do not think it coincidental that this is at the time Clarke's ideas, and his cheap editions of Nepos and Eutropius, were becoming popular. Lockwood's work certainly became popular, entering 11 editions from 1737-73, and he also wrote a history of England in exactly the same style which was an even bigger success – later, a clergyman named George Reeves made a useful sideline applying the formula to other places and periods. 99

The 1690s also mark the beginning of ancient history in English prose. Laurence Eachard and a succession of continuators eventually wrote seven volumes carrying his narrative all the way down to the Reformation and the fall of Byzantium, but initially began with one volume on the Roman Republic. 100 Like Brown, this starts by demonstrating the inadequacy of existing works; principally, that because the ancient sources are so fragmentary it is a time-consuming and expensive business to assemble anything like a complete narrative. Having it all in one place will be 'particularly useful to Students and Young Gentlemen by giving them an insight into the principal Roman customs, laws and magistrates.' Unlike 'mere antiquarians', a narrative history can explain their origins, development and context, rather than simply offering disconnected snapshots, and thus make a deeper understanding of both the development of modern institutions and the content of classical literature quicker to attain. 101

Eachard was very soon after at work on a second volume, covering the Imperial period down to Constantine. 102 This was very much in the same style of a bare-bones narrative, long on exciting incidents and digressions on the meanings of offices and technical terms, with minimal scholarly apparatus or engagement with contradictory sources. What is interesting is its dedication. Published in 1698, it is dedicated to the young Duke of Gloucester (the son of Queen Anne) 'as I have heard Your Grace read my first volume with interest and profit'. This volume is intended to excite the Duke's ambition to rule wisely and with restraint; all those Emperors who did not do so died violently or miserably, save Tiberius and Severus, whose

99 R.Lockman, A New History of England by Question and Answer (London 1734); G.Reeves, The scriptures made easy. Being a new and complete history of the Holy Bible, by question and answer (London 1768); G.Reeves & G.Kearsley, A new and complete history of the world; from the creation down to the present time: by question and answer (London 1764)
100 L.Eachard (or Echard), The Roman history, from the building of the city, to the perfect settlement of the empire, by Augustus Caesar (London 1695)
101 Ibid. preface (n.p.)
102 L.Eachard, The Roman history, from the settlement of the empire by Augustus Caesar, to the removal of the imperial seat by Constantine the Great ... Volume II (London 1698)
misdeeds are to an extent redeemed by the good service that they did the state. Conversely, good Emperors die in their beds, at least until the Army is too corrupt to bear any governance, which Eachard notes cannot be the case in England.\textsuperscript{103} The potential influence of Eachard's work, superficial though it was, is demonstrated in one very famous case. Edward Gibbon dated his first interest in the Byzantine period to an idle afternoon when as a schoolboy he picked up one of Eachard's continuators' later volumes.\textsuperscript{104}

Another work covering similar ground was also dedicated to the young Duke. This is an interesting history of the later Roman Empire by the controversial essayist and arch-Modern William Wotton, author of the \textit{Reflections on Ancient and Modern Learning}.\textsuperscript{105} Compared to Eachard it is a much more scholarly production, with extensive side- and foot-notes, one of the first works of narrative history to make use of the infant study of numismatics to fix dates and titles. In fact, the preface says that Wotton was commissioned to write the \textit{History} by the Duke's tutor, Bishop Burnet of Salisbury, and the dedication is posthumous, as the sickly Duke died whilst the volume was in the press. Again, the ostensible point is to compare the acts and fates of 'good' and 'bad' Emperors, in this case two pairs; Marcus Aurelius and his son Commodus; Elagabulus (or Heliogabulus) and his cousin and heir Severus Alexander. The attempt is not entirely successful, largely because so much has to be left out of the obscure and rather racy life of Elagabulus – the one whose only extant ancient biography was described by Ronald Syme as a 'farrago of cheap pornography' as late as 1968.\textsuperscript{106}

In both cases, though, the focus is on rulership, and this may explain why almost all subsequent authors concentrate on the Republican period. As Momigliano discussed in relation to Tacitus (see above), the central problem of imperial-era historiography is either how to live under a tyranny, or how to avoid being a tyrant.\textsuperscript{107} All readers, all children, need teaching how to be virtuous citizens in a free state, or even in the twilight of a free state \textit{à la} Cicero. However, presenting England (or the author's home nation) as a fully-formed tyranny was dangerous, and how many young men are in danger of becoming tyrants themselves? The respectability of studying the Empire began to be restored by Montesquieu and his focus on

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid. p.3
\textsuperscript{104} E. Gibbon, \textit{The Autobiography of Edward Gibbon} ed. J. Murray (London 1897) p.58
\textsuperscript{105} W. Wotton, \textit{The History of Rome from the Death of Antoninus Pius to the Death of Severus Alexander} (London 1701)
\textsuperscript{106} R. Syme, 'The Bogus Names in the \textit{Historia Augusta}' in \textit{Bonner Historia-Augusta-Colloquium 1964/5} (Bonn 1966) p.258
explaining the process of decline and fall, where there was an undeniable educational purpose in learning to spot the first signs of decadence, but appears to have been far from complete in the 1790s. This lasting concern about the relative educational merit of the imperial period is seen again in the near-total absence of Imperial history from the curriculum at the best-attested English college, Christ Church. Pocock describes the pre-Enlightenment neoclassical narrative history as essentially a *speculum principis*, merely aimed at an increasingly broad range of 'princes' extending to cover all who might play a part in public life. This expanded audience may be seen in a change in dedications – whereas Fourcroy, Eachard and Wotton all dedicated their works to young royals, later ancient history books for schoolboys tend to be prefaced with articles commending them to parents or to schools.

Annotated editions or translations of the Classics are an older form of writing on ancient history and could be aimed at a wide variety of audiences, but there was an increase in very heavily-annotated editions of introductory texts, such as the epitomators of Roman history. Many of them were produced by John Clarke of Hull, including a Cornelius Nepos and a Eutropius in the facing-page Latin and English style familiar to modern readers from the Loeb Classical Library, with annotations and end-essays, which became very popular as an introductory language text with more 'modernist' teachers, those not stuck on rote memorisation as a teaching tool. Those teachers, however, must have been very keen indeed on good eyesight because the print is minuscule – about 6pt. This, like the similarly illegible Lockwood *Roman History*, reflects the publishers' desire to keep these volumes cheap, so that schoolboys might buy them, destroy them in the ordinary course of education, and replace them at will.

There are also extremely elegant, expensive versions of similar texts in the same style. John Hart in 1754 produced a beautiful, heavily-annotated translation of Herodian's history of the later Roman Empire, which had so many side-, foot- and end-notes it ended up as a treatise on later Roman religion and administration with quotations from Herodian at the top. Hart expressly introduces this as a work for those coming to classical studies for the first time, who need a one-volume primer in both events and antiquities. However this is very much a

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108 See below, Chapter 5 pp.124-33  
109 Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion* i 172-3  
110 J.Clarke, *Eutropius's compendious history of Rome together with an Engl. tr., notes and an index* (York 1722)  
111 J.Hart, *Herodian's History of his own times, or of the Roman empire after Marcus, translated into English with large notes* (London 1754)
production for the elite; its preoccupations are with the administration of an empire and it is elegantly, sparsely printed on fine gilt and marbled paper, light-years from the editions of Lockwood or Eachard circulating at the same time.

After the mid-point of the century the range of history texts aimed at young audiences expands hugely. Cheap pocket dictionaries of classical geography and biography appear, expressly to aid students in following the narratives of histories. One of these, by Thomas Browne (not related to the translator of Fourcroy) contains suggestions for how teachers might use it, by encouraging their students to look up any references they do not recognise from the day's class-work in their free time, and be prepared to be examined upon their researches the next day.112 Again, this strongly suggests that the lack of evidence for particular schools teaching ancient history does not mean no schools did so – this and other works were clearly serving an existing market in ancient history books for school use.

However, the market in what might by this point be called history textbooks was cornered by Oliver Goldsmith, better known today as a playwright and novelist. In the 1760s he published his histories of Greece and Rome, each in two volumes, which largely superseded for the young reader the more voluminous earlier works on the Roman Republic by Eachard and Rollin, and provided one of the first such Greek histories in English.113 The latter appeared as the amount and standard of Greek taught in schools was improving, which may reflect a growing curiosity about the history of Greece which was now being alluded to more in class.

Goldsmith, recognising a gap in the market, produced an abbreviation of his own Roman History, reducing it to one smaller volume, about two-fifths the original length, 'a concise, plain and unaffected narrative which cannot fail of being serviceable' to students.114 Relative to the original work, Goldsmith took out most of the (already few) critical passages in which he compared or criticised ancient authors, with the acknowledged effect that 'every character is left in possession of that fame or infamy which it obtained from its contemporaries, or those who came immediately after … it appears now too late to rejudge the virtues or the vices of those men who were but incompletely known to their own historians.'115 This left a simple

112 T.Browne, A New Classical Dictionary for the Use of Schools (London 1797)
113 O.Goldsmith, The Roman history: from the foundation of the city of Rome, to the destruction of the western empire (2vols, London 1769); O.Goldsmith, The Grecian history: from the earliest state to the death of Alexander the Great (2vols, London 1774)
114 O.Goldsmith, Dr Goldsmith's Roman History; Abridged by himself for the use of schools (London 1772)
115 Ibid. (ix)
narrative, concentrating on those periods for which the sources were clear, even if unreliable, and largely skimming over tricky periods such as the late 2nd century BC where questions of perspective and source reliability were unavoidably complex.

'Dr Goldsmith's Greece' in exactly the same vein was published after his death; in the style of his Rome but even more sharply compressed to the straightforward bits with relatively unproblematic sources, principally the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars and the campaigns of Alexander.116 Both the abridged histories were tremendous successes and much reprinted and re-edited well into the nineteenth century. If we were to look at uncredited abbreviations and plagiarisations of Goldsmith's work other legacies would appear; for example, a 'New History of the Grecian States' published in 1786 (before the acknowledged abbreviation) as part of a set of texts 'designed for the use of Young Ladies' borrows whole passages from Goldsmith and reduces them to a very condensed form.117

The earlier such books were commended by their prefaces to private tutors who direct their charges' reading, or to parents. However, from the first edition of Lockwood at least these books are advertised 'for schools'. Goldsmith claims his abbreviation was 'suggested by the Heads of some of our leading Schools, as it was thought the substance of the Roman History, thrown into an early narrative, would excite the curiosity of youth more agreeably than the common dry mode of Question and Answer'. We know they were used e.g. at Rugby (see above), and continued to be used by schools throughout the 19th century, although evidence for exactly where and how they were used in classrooms is limited.118

An interesting footnote to Goldsmith came as part of a cheap 'child's library' produced as a means of paying the bills by William Godwin, the radical philosopher, anarchist, husband of Mary Wollstonecraft and father of Mary Shelley, under a pseudonym in the 1810s.119 He criticises Goldsmith in his preface for being too scholarly, on the grounds that schoolchildren do not need 'what actually happened', that Goldsmith in any case cannot really know, and that the later Romans were also ignorant but had better information than modern authors. Therefore, if the stories are useful in exciting children to emulate the old Roman virtue,

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116 Anon., Dr Goldsmith's history of Greece, abridged, for the use of schools (London 1787) (iv)
117 R. Johnson & E. Newbery, A new history of the Grecian states, from their earliest period to their extinction by the Ottomans (London 1784)
118 Goldsmith Roman History abridged (n.p.; advertisement)
119 E. Baldwin, History of Rome: From the building of the city to the ruin of the Republic (London 1809) – the Bodleian catalogue notes that this was a pseudonym used by Godwin.
Godwin argues for keeping them regardless of whether it is plausible that Scaevola really burned his hand off, or of whether Livy's narrative of Horatius holding the bridge makes the blindest bit of sense. It is hardly surprising, being the founding father of anarchism, that Godwin is ferociously Republican, regarding Caesar as the worst of tyrants, but perhaps more surprising that he is an equally intemperate partisan of the senatorial, oligarchical party in the civil wars of the first century BC. He states that 'every decent man in Rome' took Pompey's side, as they had equally forcefully joined against the Gracchi, and regards Augustus not as the bringer of peace but a blood-crazed maniac whose establishment of the Principate is no more than 'the end of the squabbling of tyrants' and of all that is worth studying in Roman history. Perhaps the critique of Caesarism seemed particularly important in 1809, the very peak of Napoleon's power, as it is not present in so stark a form in Goldsmith's original.

Who read these works? Definitely they were read in schools, but probably not often in class – I have not found a secondary source that mentions the Rugby instance, so I suspect it was not common. There are very few schools indeed with any evidence of teaching ancient history at all, as we have seen, and not all of those would have used a text-book. The alternative of reading such works in free time or as consolidation, as suggested in several of the introductions, makes more sense. Someone certainly read these introductory texts, or they would not have been reprinted and re-edited so often. A study of the newly-available Dissenting Academies Project Libraries Index might make it possible for future scholars to come to firmer conclusions on their prevalence in school libraries.

The potentially subversive nature of ancient history in schools aimed at the masses is clearly revealed by a passing reference in Siobhan McElduff's article in *Classics and the Uses of Reception* – in the 1820s and early '30s, slightly after our period 'the Greek and Roman histories have been forbidden; such abridgements as I have seen are certainly improper; to inculcate democracy and a foolish hankering after undefined liberty is particularly dangerous in Ireland' in the opinion of one of the Commissioners for Irish Education. Quite apart from the political risks of classical (or any other) republicanism flourishing in Kildare, classics could give the peasantry enlarged ideas of the world and not create the 'habit of docility' which was the goal of peasant education.

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120 Ibid. pp.240-61

Whilst there would be far less to fear in teaching classical history to the sons of the wealthy, this does confirm that ancient history was seen as a potentially subversive topic, and one which had to be taught in its correct context with proper emphases. The difficulty of doing so may explain the relative paucity of evidence that schoolmasters actually taught ancient history from the many books published for that purpose – they were concerned about potential controversy as well as about losing time which could be spent perfecting grammar, and especially on the higher level of Greek which had begun to be expected by the end of the century.

In conclusion, schoolboys in the eighteenth century would not be taught all that much history. The main evidence for the teaching of it is the appearance of text-books aimed explicitly at schools, which was really only beginning in the second half of the century. Such teaching then suffered something of a set-back in the early nineteenth century from the resurgence of pure grammar schools teaching nothing but Classics. However, two things did happen which laid the foundations of history as a subject of study in schools.

First, the theoretical justification for teaching, as well as just reading, ancient history was laid by the likes of Turnbull and Knox. Latin and Greek began to be put in the place that even Oxford would eventually recognise, as preparatory for the study of ancient thought and society – the present structure of the Oxford classics degree, where languages are studied at Moderations level half-way through the course, followed by history, philosophy and archaeology for Greats at the end, was essentially outlined in 1807 by Edward Tatham and adopted by stages in 1829 and 1850. As Oxford went, so in the aftermath of this period many of the schools began to reproduce that structure in miniature, and having got a sufficient grasp on the ancient languages schoolboys would spend their last couple of years developing an appreciation and understanding of classical culture, as we have seen happened at Shrewsbury.

Second, there was a huge growth in the availability of accessible history texts aimed at a young audience. These could be read in a variety of ways – one which was regarded with disfavour was using textbooks as 'cribs' to give the uneducated a veneer of classical learning; Thomas Brown was keen to assure readers that this was not the purpose of his translating

122 Discussed in Gathorne-Hardy Public School Phenomenon pp.31-4
Fourcroy's introductory work, but that it would lead most readers on to higher studies, or be used to patch gaps in an incomplete education.\textsuperscript{124} The author of an abridgement of Lord Chesterfield's letters to his son made his work's use as a short-cut to learned conversation clearer, quoting Lord Mansfield in his preface, 'that had that work [Blackstone's Commentaries] been published when he was a young man it had saved him seven years of study'. The implication is clear – read Gregory's \textit{Polite Education} and harder reading can be dispensed with.\textsuperscript{125} More productively, such books could be used to support understanding of classical texts; as a foundation to begin more advanced studies by looking at their historical background; as opportunities for moral improvement; or simply as entertaining adventure stories. The existence of the texts themselves is both the first step in the democratisation of classical culture and the independence of ancient history from classics, and evidence that it was already well underway.

\textsuperscript{124} See above, p.30. In de Fourcroy, \textit{A New and Easy Method} translator's preface (n.p)
\textsuperscript{125} G. Gregory, \textit{The Elements of a Polite Education} (London 1800) preface (n.p)
Alongside the texts aimed at a youthful audience, denser and more scholarly works specifically dealing with ancient history began to appear in the early eighteenth century. In some ways, the first of these grew out of the older tradition of 'universal' history. In particular most of them throughout the century drew on Walter Raleigh's *Historie of the World*, largely for incidental coverage of societies other than Greece and Rome, and especially his treatment of Carthage. However, there are important differences. A universal history implicitly treats the history of the known world as a whole, without privileging particular societies or periods – indeed, without necessarily having much concept of periodisation. It aims at comprehensive coverage, and its process of selection aims at fitting the maximum possible range into the space available, or in the larger works the lifetime available to the author(s). As Temple Stanyan said in the introduction to the second volume of his *Grecian History*, 'relating things at length in a Historical Way, and blending together Sacred Story and Prophane, Ancient and Modern, Foreign and Domestick … is a work of too great Labour and Extent for the writer, to be thoroughly executed.'

The Universal History could be critical in its approach to evidence or particular incidents – this is Roelevink's 'critical polyhistory' - but not so much of the meaning of those incidents; it was expressly a relation of events. The rise of more comprehensive specialist histories was accompanied by an increase in debate about the moral and practical import of those periods. If it was ever true that the great success of the Roman historical tradition was giving to many important events 'one single clear immutable value' then the middle of the eighteenth century was when that tradition began to fail. We see in the histories of Greece discussed in this chapter, as well as those of Rome, a multiplicity of competing interpretations of the most familiar aspects of the classical past. These interpretations are advanced in the course of dense and specialised histories in a way that would not be possible within the confines of a universal history.

In the cases of both Greece and Rome, the eighteenth century begins with the appearance of

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126 T.Stanyan, *Grecian History from the End of the Peloponnesian War to the Death of Alexander* (London 1739) p.v


128 See on this point Levine, *Battle of the Books* pp.267-73 in particular and the second half of the book in general; he discusses at length the impact of 'modern' antiquarian learning and the rise of the expectation that history should be based on accurate research rather than simply repeating established narratives.
relatively simple, one- or two-volume Histories, clearly aimed at young readers. The *Roman Histories* of William Wotton and Laurence Eachard have already been discussed in the previous chapter. Temple Stanyan's *Grecian History*, in many ways similar, had a slightly different task to fulfil and is discussed below. By the 1730s longer, more comprehensive works began to appear which would take a more scholarly view of the topic, casting a more critical eye on received verities and connecting ancient and modern concerns in a more overt and sophisticated way which reflected some of the concerns of the 'philosophic' or 'enlightened' modern historians. 'Philosophic history' entailed a more critical examination of social institutions, which were far more capable of application to contemporary issues than the personal *exempla* and strongly individual moral approach taken by previous generations, where the public morality of a society had been less problematised, and less closely linked to particular practices or institutions.

In the case of Rome, these concerns centred around what Pocock calls the 'first decline and fall', the collapse of the Roman Republic into civil war and its rebirth as the Empire, generally agreed to have been from the outset a more or less despotic monarchy.¹²⁹ Pocock writes that most authors of the eighteenth century more or less borrowed their interpretation of the cause of civil war from the first-century historian Appian, who blamed it on the influx of wealth into the Roman upper classes.

It may be helpful at this point to sum up this 'enlightened narrative' briefly, as follows. The influx of wealth from foreign conquest allowed the upper classes to build up large slave-worked estates (*latifundia*), resulting in the dispossession of the smallholders who were the backbone of the Republic.¹³⁰ These smallholders were under the added burden of military service which, as the field of action moved far enough from Rome that troops often did not come home at the end of a campaigning season, could take a man off the land for anything up to twenty years, in which time his dependants would probably have to sell up. The army therefore came to be made up of landless peasants rather than 'solid' citizens with a stake in the *status quo*, and could be bought for *coup-d'état* by unscrupulous populists with the

¹²⁹ The term 'principate' used below and by most modern scholars to refer to the Roman Empire of the first two centuries AD, whilst not unknown in the eighteenth century, was popularised in the early 20th century by Matthias Gelzer, and thus represents an anachronism; it is however a useful means of avoiding confusion between 'Rome's empire' and 'Rome when ruled by an Emperor', as 'the Roman Empire' in our period would more often, but not exclusively, have carried the former sense.

¹³⁰ Appian, *Civil Wars* I.7-10 (trans. H.White, 4vols, London 1913) iii 17-21
promise of land. This view was largely upheld by Montesquieu, and after him by many others.\textsuperscript{131} However, a wide variety of explanations emerges from the three authors discussed here, who actually explored Roman history in detail.

For both Greece and Rome, a handful of major histories show the development of historiography over the period, covering what their authors felt to be the important periods in depth and with an explicit argumentative purpose. In the Roman case, the first is the extensive (sixteen volumes duodecimo in the first edition, ten octavo in the more widely-available second) of Charles Rollin's \textit{Roman History}. This was originally written in French by the Jansenist former Rector of the University of Paris as a follow-up to his \textit{Ancient History}, which combined a universal history of the pre-Roman world with a slightly more focused history of Greece down to the conquest of Macedon by Rome in the 160s BC. It is joined by a pair of later works by Nathaniel Hooke and Adam Ferguson, which demonstrate different ways in which more sophisticated approaches to Roman history began to emerge. Hooke's is highly detailed, critical and cynical about the nature of its sources. He offers a radical and subversive interpretation of Roman history as class conflict. Ferguson's later 'philosophic' history ties in with the theories of political and moral philosophy he taught at Edinburgh, where he was educated himself in the early 1740s, offering a sophisticated version of the 'Enlightenment narrative' of Roman history. Ferguson's work at Edinburgh, including his use of ancient history, is discussed further in Chapter 9.

Both Rollin's works were rapidly translated into English as the volumes appeared in France, as they had no real equivalent in English. The \textit{Ancient History} was an avowedly uncritical and frequently inconsistent compilation, but served as a one-stop-shop for the little-known societies of Assyria, Carthage, Egypt and Persia. It remained read far longer than its successor – there was simply not enough known about the pre-Classical world for it to be worth superseding. The fifteenth and last English edition of the whole appeared in 1828, and the earlier individual volumes (on Carthage and Egypt) were reprinted as late as the 1880s.\textsuperscript{132} This clearly demonstrates a continuing demand for such simple, introductory works of ancient

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{131} C. de Secondat, baron Montesquieu, \textit{Considerations on the causes of the grandeur of the Romans and their decline}, ed. and trans. D.Lowenthal (repr. Indianapolis, IN 1965, definitive edition published Paris 1748) pp.39-41
\item \textsuperscript{132} C. Rollin, \textit{Ancient History of the Egyptians, Carthaginians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes and Persians, Macedonians, and Grecians} (2\textsuperscript{nd} ed, 12vols, London 1738-40; 15\textsuperscript{th} ed., 6vols, London 1828). Ibid. \textit{Ancient History of the Egyptians and Carthaginians} (2vols, London 1881-2) is the first two volumes of Rollin's original plus a very brief digest of the remainder.
\end{itemize}
history, but also the narrow range of the field. While there were endless new textbooks and simple narrative histories of Rome, and a steadily increasing number dealing with Greece, this popular interest never extended to the rest of the ancient Mediterranean.

3.1 Roman Histories – Rollin, Hooke and Ferguson

In comparison, Rollin's *Roman History* was less enduring. It was probably not helped by Rollin's death shortly after reaching the half-way mark; the remaining volumes were completed by his less distinguished pupil Jean-Baptiste Crévier, the author of a standard commentary on Livy and a collection of biographies of Roman emperors. It shared the imperfections of the *Ancient History*; it was largely annalistic in format, often uncritical in its use of sources, reproduced many irrelevant incidents at great length simply because they were well-attested, and expended a great many words on insights which rarely rose above the facile. However, it was readable, contained the sort of moral reflections considered essential to the edification of young readers, and went into far more detail than Laurence Echard's one-volume effort of 1691.

Rollin begins his *History* with a long preface explaining the rise of Rome in terms of the merits of its constitution, particularly the excellence of the Senate to which 'Rome owed all her power and conquests'. The preface ends, however, with praise for Montesquieu's 'philosophic' analysis of the Republic, and a brief mention that 'the poison of prosperity' lay at the root of Rome's decay – a claim dating back to Livy and Pliny, who saw the process of decline as beginning with the phenomenal wealth brought back to Rome by victory in the First Syrian War against Antiochus III in the 190s BC. The introduction to the second volume expands on this with a long paraphrase of Polybius on the Roman constitution. It notes that the balance of power between the Senate and people was largely successful even though occasionally upset by ambitious individual tribunes or consuls, so much so as to compensate for a citizen body corrupted by luxurious living and easy victories. The majority of blame for the Republic's decline rests on the citizens' declining ability or willingness to fulfil their established roles in the republican institutions.

These early conclusions are largely upheld in the body of the work, both Rollin's own and

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134 Pliny, *Natural History* XXXIII.148
135 Rollin, *Roman History* ii 26
Crévier's continuation. There is a heavy focus on individual character; whenever a significant individual is born, first appears in the narrative, or dies, there is an extended appreciation of his character, with illustrative biographical anecdotes and a judgement reached as to whether and how he was a good citizen or bad influence. Most of these cover half a page or so; some, such as the discussion of Cato after his death, cover ten pages or more. These extended character studies reflect a particular view of the educational purpose of ancient history. Rollin's views of the decline and fall of classical republicanism must be inferred from his treatment of certain key events and personalities; his opinion of any individual is clear beyond doubt, and far more space is devoted to biography than political theory.

For Rollin, history seems to be about showing character types in their purest and most familiar forms. Where individuals might divide opinion, almost exclusively later in the work, where there are multiple detailed sources to draw on, Crévier generally takes a traditionalist attitude, unlikely to challenge opinions received from Livy or Plutarch. Goldsmith's disclaimer that he would leave individuals with 'the fame their contemporaries gave them' might equally have been applied by Rollin and Crévier. The characters of the major actors in the Late Republic, for example, have a tendency to change based on which source Crévier follows for a particular event – for example, Mark Antony gets a good write-up for his conduct at Pharsalia, where the main source is Plutarch's biography, but those parts of the narrative drawn from Dio Cassius mark him down heavily. Cicero is excused for dithering at the outbreak of civil war at that point in the narrative, but criticised sharply for the same failing in the appreciation of his character inserted at the point of his death.

Overall, scholarly accuracy and especially consistency were not the main goals of Rollin's work. Rather, it is almost a concentrated form of universal history. Rollin's *Ancient History* claimed to cover the entire pre-Roman world, divided roughly geographically. The *Roman History* continued the same aim, but centred on Rome alone because Rome's political history was, by the end of the period covered by the *Ancient History*, that of the entire Mediterranean world. Rollin's aim was to stitch together a continuous and comprehensive narrative of Roman history, shorn in its earlier parts of the downright absurdities Livy occasionally put in – principally, the supernatural interventions in the first decade, but also a few particularly confused passages later on, and the constant background hum of omens, portents, auguries.

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136 Ibid. ix 280-91
137 Rollin, *Roman History* x 82, 292.
138 Ibid, ix 47, 484
and prophecies. Through this structure, the examples of virtuous lives lived under a variety of conditions could be clearly displayed and placed in their proper context. In this sense it was somewhat 'old-fashioned', coming out as Montesquieu tackled the late Republic in a more analytical fashion, but it still provided a single coherent narrative for readers who lacked the background to fill in the gaps in the classical sources, and plenty of morally improving lives and incidents for readers to ponder and emulate.

Nathaniel Hooke's *Roman History* was a much more ambitious project, taking over 30 years to appear in four volumes between 1738-71. Unlike previous works, it aimed squarely and avowedly at an adult audience. Originally intended as an improved translation and abbreviation of the French Jesuit historians Catrou and Rouille's *Roman History*, Hooke decided their work, like others available, failed to address scholarly differences over detail or interpretation – he adds in his preface that Eachard is too dry and brief for a discerning reader, and the Abbé de Vertot, whilst thoughtful, is frequently inaccurate. Hooke wrote relatively little in a long career, though he was well-connected in literary circles. A Catholic and thus barred from a university education, he was a schoolmate of Alexander Pope at Twyford School. When Hooke died immediately before the publication of the third volume (though leaving apparently very extensive drafts for the fourth) his work was completed by the Scottish historian and journalist Gilbert Stuart, not to be confused with the painter of the same name.

Hooke was a fairly typical literary man of the period; he attended Lincoln's Inn but never seems to have practiced law, was a companion and protegé of the Earl of Oxford and various other, mainly Tory, political figures, and wrote up the Duchess of Marlborough's memoirs along with his *Roman History* and treatises on female education and mythology. It is an open question how far posthumous editing might have firmed up Hooke's radical views on Rome, but there is certainly no obvious disconnect between the tone or themes of volumes II, III and IV. Stuart, the son of a long-serving Edinburgh professor of Humanity, was a minor historian

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139 Floris Verhaart spoke to the Besterman Enlightenment Workshop at Oxford, on the connection between Rollin's preoccupation with the *circumstances* of virtuous lives and his Jansenism in the regular Monday workshop on February 9th 2015, entitled ‘The Making of a Classic: Charles Rollin’s *Histoire Romaine* and the Debate about the Role of Classical Scholarship and Education in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries’. I understand his article on the subject is forthcoming.

140 N. Hooke, *The Roman History, from the Building of Rome to the Ruin of the Commonwealth* (4vols, 1738–71) i 4

himself, specialising in medieval England and Scotland, with a particular focus on the
development of liberty from Germanic and Celtic beginnings. When Hooke died, Stuart was
only 20 and the third volume of the Roman History predates all his own works, though
arguably it prefigures Stuart's love of contrariness and controversy. It was a further seven
years before Stuart completed the last volume based on Hooke's work.\textsuperscript{142}

Hooke's work has three distinguishing features, all of which cast interesting lights on how
ancient history might have been taught. First of all, he is totally uninterested in the private
lives of individual Romans. Catiline's debt, Mark Antony's promiscuity, and the younger
Cato's drinking, among other 'defining' character traits not directly related to the public
sphere, do not get so much as a look-in. Lucullus' wealth is important only in as much as it
demonstrates the Senate's detachment from the people; there is no individual condemnation
for him. Whatever Hooke is trying to demonstrate with his History, it has little or nothing to
do with individual character, in sharp contrast to Rollin before, to the majority of his
contemporaries, and even to his 'philosophic' successors Ferguson and Gibbon. This almost
entirely negates the use of history as a source of moral example, certainly of examples of the
individual 'good life', in order to allow Hooke to concentrate on Roman society as a whole.
The importance of individual, moral examples in the teaching of ancient history endured long
past Hooke, and it is a little surprising to see how totally uninterested he is in what most of his
contemporaries would have considered one of the major uses of narrative history.

Second, Hooke is keen to defend the relevance and certainty of Roman history. Having
discarded individual character as a major aspect of his work, he is more reliant on claiming
historical authority for his discussion of institutions and class interests, which (unlike
inspiring characters) need to be true to be useful. A long preface to the second volume defends
the credibility of 'the History of the first 500 years of Rome' against scholarly doubts in
general and those of Louis de Beaufort in particular. De Beaufort had written in French a
lengthy dissertation arguing that there was almost no accurate information contained in
Roman history before the beginning of Polybius' narrative in the 240s BC. This degree of
cynicism about the epistemology of ancient history would not become mainstream for another
200 years, and whilst Hooke acknowledged that many of the details in Livy were
questionable, he argued at length that Livy and Dionysius had had access to more primary
\textsuperscript{142} W.Zachs, Without Regard to Good Manners: A Biography of Gilbert Stuart 1743-1786 (Edinburgh 1992)
p.48 – the publication is considered by Zachs merely an example of 'typical Grub Street hack work' and
barely mentioned.
Hooke admits much is uncertain in the early history of Rome, but argues that it is still in a different class from the fruitless speculation of those who try to calculate when Noah's posterity settled various countries. 'Much of the embroidery and flourishing may be given up, without parting with the ground-work' of early Roman history. When Livy says there was a war, Hooke concludes, a war almost certainly occurred, probably with the outcome described, and the specific incidents related were at least what the Romans of later times sincerely believed to have happened.

In twenty closely-argued pages, Hooke addresses inconsistencies and inaccuracies in de Beaufort's account of the sources available to Livy and earlier Roman historians, listing the types of records known to have existed at the time of the late Republic and discussing what sort of historical evidence they might have provided. A case study he adopts is the treaty 'from the first year of the Roman Republic' reproduced by Polybius, which contradicts all other accounts of the period and suggests Rome already had a trading relationship with Carthage at that early date. Beaufort's conclusion was that the early and reputable Polybius must be right, therefore Livy and Dionysius of Halicarnassus must have made up their contradicting details, or relied on hopelessly inaccurate sources. Hooke offers several plausible explanations for the contradiction; the treaty Polybius saw may have been incomplete and speculatively reconstructed, or misdated, or imperfectly translated from the archaic Latin which, according to Cicero, nobody truly understood (at a date less than 70 years after Polybius wrote).

This too is relevant to the teaching of ancient history. It counters the claim of Goldsmith, discussed in the previous chapter, that 'what really happened' is unimportant because unknowable, and makes a case for considering the history of Rome as a coherent whole rather than concentrating only on the couple of periods with really reliable contemporary sources available. The teaching of Roman history as a whole narrative is limited in some 'universal' history courses of the period, for example it is addressed by Charles Mackie in a very fragmented way, whereas later courses at Aberdeen and Glasgow try to cover Rome as a narrative in itself.

143 L. de Beaufort, *Dissertation sur l'incertitude des cinq premiers siècles de l'histoire romaine* (Utrecht, 1738)
144 Hooke, *Roman History* ii (ii)
145 Ibid. ii (xxxii)
146 See below, Chapter 6.
The third distinctive feature of Hooke's work is its strongly contrarian perspective on the 'accepted' narrative of the fall of the Roman Republic. His approach was a major development in the historiography of the period, although not much built on by immediately subsequent scholars. This is highly relevant to any claim, for example that of Womersley discussed in the first chapter, that ancient history could be considered a potentially radical or subversive study. Hooke's conclusions are surprisingly revisionist, and could very easily be read as a criticism of contemporary British society. As many of Hooke's conclusions relate to his interpretation of rather technical matters of Roman history, it is important to explain them fully by comparison with a more conventional 'enlightened narrative', such as that of Adam Ferguson's extremely popular and influential *History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic*.

The received version of the fall of the Republic was that the majority of conservative opinion in the Senate – what Cicero called the *boni*, the good citizens, or the *optimates*, the best citizens, represented 'the republic'. They might be short-sighted, individually dishonest, or in the wrong on particular issues, but nonetheless stood for the mixed Roman constitution, dominated but not entirely controlled by the aristocracy, which had served Rome so well. This view came principally from Cicero and Livy, and whilst modern authors agreed that there was a point after which the *optimates'* attempt to preserve the Republic was doomed to quixotic failure, most of them placed the final point of no return quite late, and nonetheless admired the spirit of the attempt. Rollin, for example, ultimately concludes that for all Pompey's failings, principally his boundless love of applause, he 'did not transgress the boundaries of a free republic' and was therefore Caesar's moral, if not military, superior.147

For Hooke, this is nonsense; all the civil warriors are merely squabbling over the corpse of the Republic, and Caesar at least was honest enough to admit it was dead and to propose replacing it with something viable.148 The second century saw the end of the truly mixed constitution not in civil war, but in an earlier and largely non-violent usurpation of absolute power by the aristocracy. Tiberius Gracchus, the first major populist leader in two centuries, attempted to regain control of nominally state-owned lands in order to distribute lands to the Roman citizens dispossessed by the combination of growing *latifundia* and overseas military

147 Rollin, *Roman History* ix 159
148 Hooke, *Roman History* iv 39 and passim
service. Hooke considers his extrajudicial murder by a group of prominent senators as the final straw, rather than the beginning of the end, as it was more usually considered. From Tiberius Gracchus followed various other attempts to break the optimates’ control of the Roman polity and economy, all of which were put down with force.

The conventional view of the Gracchi and their cause, derived mainly from Plutarch, is that they were representing a real problem, but their cures were worse than the disease – corn doles promoting idleness, and land distribution undermining property rights. Hooke has less than no time for this point of view; the opening to volume III dismisses these arguments in the specific case of Rome. The concentration of land and wealth was so great a threat to the stability of the mixed constitution that even violent and painful change was necessary – and if it was not possible, the mixed Republic was no longer either extant or viable.

Hooke does not, as Rollin sometimes seems to do, treat the civil wars as a more extreme revival of the strife between patricians and plebeians in the early days of the Republic, but there are two important continuities. The first is the importance of land and debt as the motors of oppression and strife. Hooke presents the lex Licinia, which limited private estates to 500 iugera (usually translated 'acres' - a big farm, but one worked by a staff in the double figures), and the lex Poetalia Papiria, which restricted the penalties for debt, and in particular banned absolutely the practice of debt slavery, rather than the more commonly-cited laws which opened up the highest offices to non-patricians, as the essential achievements of the period. These developments allowed a phase of domestic tranquility and rapid expansion. Second, Hooke treats both periods as essentially a class conflict between on the one hand the great landowners - Patricians in the early Republic, and optimates in the late, but with their control of land as a common factor - and on the other hand, everyone else. In both periods there is a disconnect between the class and their leaders. Discussing the Decemvirate in the 450s BC, Hooke notes that whilst individual Tribunes of the Plebs were often aggressive, self-aggrandizing upstarts who provoked conflict to put their names in the history books, and consuls were equally often dishonest and devious in defence of their privilege, the classes as a whole were broadly patriotic as they understood it. The only collective Hooke condemns is the faction of young patricians in the era of the Military Tribunes. These were the firebrand,
wastrel scions of the aristocracy who would not be allowed in any right-thinking Senate. They thus relied on the absolute power of the Patrician class to give them any prospects at all - and took advantage of it to get away with various misdeeds, including riots and chronic debts.  

By the time of the Gracchi and after, this disconnect works slightly differently. For Hooke, every *optimas* is guilty of usurping public money and land to create an oppressive oligarchy. Non-élite support for the *boni*, referred to often by Cicero and assumed by most Roman historians, is never mentioned. However, the mass of the people, including most *populares*, is separated from some of the more notorious leaders, such as Marius – Hooke's schema almost requires that good citizens, the vast majority of citizens, must be on the popular side, yet the evidence of, for example, Marius' massacres cannot be simply ignored. By the time of Sulla, he argues, the principled *populares* who aimed to recreate the small-holding citizenry of the third century at the expense of the *latifundia* had vanished; subsequent land-reform proposals were to purchase land (from those willing to sell and in need of money i.e. other smallholders) to give it to favoured groups, mostly veterans of a particular magnate's campaigns. This is essentially the systemic analysis suggested by Pocock as the consensus 'Enlightened narrative' of the collapse of the Republic, but with a very different moral interpretation to other figures of the period.

The combination of Hooke's lack of interest in personal lives and strong sympathy for the 'popular' cause gives an interesting slant to the second half of the work. It is questionable whether Hooke's great villain, in as much as he has an individual rather than a class enemy, is Cicero, or his contemporary biographer Conyers Middleton. Middleton adopted the view promulgated by Cicero's own work, that the height of the Republic had been in the mid-2nd century BC, its institutions then perfect, and any attempt to change them had necessarily been for the worse. The Gracchi, to Middleton, had not merely been wrongheaded, but deliberate and premeditated traitors. He went on to produce a biography which praised Cicero so extravagantly that even that vain and conceited orator might have blushed.

Hooke adopts the opposite extreme, and his last volume and a half is a fascinating experiment in the logical consequences of assuming your main literary source is utterly self-serving,
morally and physically cowardly, and generally incompetent, as well as in thrall to a fundamentally wicked cause. He also returns to an older tradition of considering Caesar's assassins as utter villains; Brutus especially is presented as an ingrate, extortionist, and usurer. This is far closer to Dante's Brutus and Cassius in the ninth circle of hell than Renaissance humanist praise for the Last of the Romans, and mirrors a laudatory portrait of Julius Caesar – again unusual in a period where ambitious military strong-men evoked memories of Cromwell; however wise and enlightened Caesar's legislation had been, most in that period would argue (with Rollin, Goldsmith, Eachard and Ferguson inter alia) that Caesar was still fundamentally in the wrong. Hooke, naturally, disagrees.

Cromwell frequently wrapped himself in Caesar's mantle, as the military genius who had overthrown a fatally decayed system and established sound governance. The comparison remained current, as in Thomas Hayter's Remarks on Mr Hume's Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, which argues that religion has ever been abused in the service of political expediency and had Caesar had an interest in theology he would naturally 'have pretended, while he sought his own aggrandizement, “to seek the Lord”.' Caesar was probably the ancient figure most referenced in Parliament in the debates discussed later in Chapter 11, where again he is generally presented as having been in the wrong in the Civil Wars.

One final notable point in Hooke is his disregard for any claim that Rome was ever a just ruler over its territories. He argues as early as the First Punic War that Rome was an aggressive, expansionist state with no regard at all for morality or the laws of war, a development more usually assigned to the Third Punic War. All three Punic Wars, as well as most other wars in the third century and beyond, and in particular the siege of Numantia, are laid firmly at the door of Roman warmongering, whilst 'from the victory at Zama to the end of the Third Punic War, there was scarce anything worthy of ancient Rome.' He particularly criticises Rollin's laudatory portrait of Scipio Africanus as a citizen as well as a general, remarking that 'I cannot from the actions of the Scipios, Marcellus, Flamininus, Aemilius Paullus … and suchlike worthies, form those high ideas of their virtues as their Panegyrists both ancient and modern

157 Hooke, Roman History iv 251
158 Ibid. iv 193-6, 249-50
159 B.Woodford, Perceptions of a Monarchy Without a King: Reactions to Oliver Cromwell's Power (Montreal 2013) pp.44-7
would have us entertain. Even before the 'final death of Liberty in Rome', there was clearly no liberty outside it.

After Hooke's full-bodied assault on the Roman Republic, Adam Ferguson's far better-known *History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic* represents a return to traditional interpretations as well as the philosophical and erudite history it is usually considered to be. Where Hooke is an iconoclast, Ferguson is measured. He seeks general, systematic explanations for the fall of the Republic, but works with rather than against ancient authors who, if they lacked philosophy, had a deep understanding of the conditions, as it were, on the ground. His history is that of a British Whig and an Edinburgh professor of moral philosophy; staunch for a mixed constitution, but more interested in maintaining a workable status quo than in theoretical perfection or the regaining of a lost ideal past.

Ferguson's attitude to the Gracchi is quite simple. Regardless of whether they had a complaint, undermining property rights and the class system is necessarily and absolutely wrong because those are the roots of a stable society. He points out that the *ager publicus* was misappropriated at least a century before the time of the Gracchi, and that it could be the start of a slippery slope; if land should be restored to its 'original' owners, why not give it back to the conquered cities? He notes that in any case we have no contemporary records of how land in Italy became *ager publicus* or exactly how it was then supposed to be administered. The anti-radical logic is quite clearly applicable to contemporary Britain at a time when the American crisis was causing a rise in idealistic thinking about what ought to be the case in a more abstractly perfect constitution.

Whereas Hooke had seen the Republic as a lost cause from the Gracchi onwards and claims to be preserving it as humbug, Ferguson argues that party platforms had real import, were stable, ideologically coherent, albeit wrong, and often reflected sincere disagreement over the best interests of the Republic until as late as the 'first Triumvirate' (59BC). Only at that date, he says, did the magnates become wholly self-interested and unconcerned with the institutions of the Republic.

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161 Ibid ii 382, contra. Rollin, *Roman History* v 324  
162 A. Ferguson, *History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic* (3vols, London 1783)  
163 Ibid. i 307  
164 See below, Ch.11  
165 Ferguson, *Roman Republic* ii 265
Ferguson, then, blames neither the desire for land and citizenship reform (which after all repeatedly failed), nor the obstinate opposition to it, for the collapse of the Roman Republic. He argues that the *populares* were dangerous and wrong, and certainly has Caesar as the great villain of the piece, lacking all restrain to his ambitions or respect for anything beyond himself, yet Ferguson does not hold either Caesar or the *populares* responsible for the end of Republican government. Rather, Ferguson considers the structural weaknesses of the Republic to have been vital, and in the end most of those weaknesses come back to the simple fact that it was too big for the existing institutions to cope.

In this sense, it is the 'poison of prosperity' that destroyed the Republic, not morally but practically. This theme runs through the second and third volumes; for example, the expansion of the citizen body at the end of the Social Wars is presented by Ferguson (following Montesquieu) as a serious error because it made the 'mass of the people' far too large to be heard by direct democracy, and increased the surplus population of the city of Rome by the influx of poor peasants seeking the corn dole and casual work.\(^{166}\) However, it is not the measure that is wrong but the situation; Ferguson, like Hooke, accepts that it is hard to see how the expanded franchise could have been avoided.\(^{167}\) He says the same of Marius' recruitment of landless peasants into the army – it undermined a prop of the constitution, but the alternative was a smaller empire or destruction.\(^{168}\)

Ferguson makes his diagnosis explicit in a long summary of the civil war era as a whole at the point of the battle of Philippi. The blind conservatism of the *optimates*, whilst a noble endeavour to preserve Rome's ancestral liberties, had no answer to the fact that the size of the empire, scale of long-term military service, and extremely corrupt institutions of provincial government were not sustainable. The popular element of the constitution had long ceased to be consultation of 'the citizens', most of whom were too far from Rome even if they still had their farms, and become a contest to recruit the biggest starving mob. The provincials could have no voice as citizens and were thus ever ready to be led into war with the promise of greater self-government which could free them from the tyranny of proconsuls.\(^{169}\)

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\(^{166}\) Ibid. i 452

\(^{167}\) Loc. cit. Cf. Hooke, *Roman History* iii 119

\(^{168}\) Ferguson, *Roman Republic* i 373

\(^{169}\) Ibid. iii 335
However, none of the dynasts of the civil wars had any better answers; even Sulla, who unlike Caesar or Crassus had a coherent legislative and constitutional programme, proposed little more than nailing down a lid of aristocratic absolutism over these issues.\textsuperscript{170} Octavian, unlike the previous generation of dynasts raised under the Republic, inherited something like a legitimate claim to power. He is in this analysis entirely excusable for creating the beginnings, if nothing more, of a realistic or flawed alternative system of government.\textsuperscript{171} Ferguson ends with an interestingly Montesquieuian analysis of what went wrong with the early Emperors; essentially, the lack of a court culture of refinement and taste, and of a nobility bound to the 'crown' which could create such a culture, meant that Emperors' pleasures were simply those of the lower classes carried to absurd and corrupting extremes.\textsuperscript{172}

There is much in Hooke and Ferguson to argue anew for the necessity of studying and teaching Roman history, whilst Rollin is the last word in an older, humanist approach to classical 'virtue'. Hooke's work has clear radical implications; England might already have suffered just such a coup by a wealthy faction buying up the source of political power. It would not have been, and still is not, difficult to read his \textit{Roman History} as a call to arms against present attempts to exclude the people from their rights. Equally, it could be read less alarmingly as a warning of the consequences of complacency, or an encomium of the representative system which avoids such a disconnect between the people and their rulers. What it could not conceivably be is a safe source of ahistoric, improving, heroic anecdotes. If David Womersley is right that Roman history came to be seen late in the eighteenth century as a potentially radicalising study, here is a powerful example of the kind of work he is talking about.

Ferguson is also full of relevance if we are to understand the philosophic reader or educator of the later eighteenth century. The \textit{Roman Republic} is his \textit{History of Civil Society} (discussed at length below in ch.9) teaching by examples, marrying to that broad view of social history a depth of erudite detail and critical thought. Whilst his work is fractionally shorter than Hooke's, he reaches the Third Punic War in a bare 200 pages and spends all the remainder on the last 120 years of the Republic. Not for nothing does Pocock, who barely mentions Hooke, consider Ferguson and Gibbon to have constituted a matched pair in giving classical

\textsuperscript{170} Ibid. iii 339
\textsuperscript{171} Ibid. iii 341-4
\textsuperscript{172} Ibid. iii 591
background to the 'Enlightened history' of the rise of modern society. Again, the lessons for contemporary readers are clear: to fit the institutions of the state to its scale, and to beware utopian radicalism. The concerns about the over-large republic are not coincidental in a work begun in the crisis that led to the American War of Independence and completed in the middle of that conflict – Ferguson's disenfranchised, unrepresented citizens too far from their metropolis and their alleged representatives, deprived in practice if not in theory of their democratic rights, would be wholly familiar to Thomas Paine or Thomas Jefferson.

Both Hooke and Ferguson occasionally appear in the records of books read at Christ Church, Oxford, in the 1790s, along with a relatively small number of other moderns against a vast preponderance of classical authors. Although there is limited evidence of either author actually being taught in universities, the type of work being done on the ancient world outside of university teaching forms an important contrast with university work, and allows a fuller understanding of the context in which we must place the lectures and textbooks discussed elsewhere. Ferguson, himself a university lecturer at Edinburgh, was able in the Roman Republic to expand on his ideas about the functioning of the state. Hooke's work enabled him to create an alternative vision of the causes of societal decline, rooted in class conflict, which relied on a critical (almost prosecutorial) attitude to sources which uniformly reflected an aristocratic understanding of what the Roman Republic was and how it worked. These works could both constitute powerful arguments for teaching Roman history. Ferguson's philosophic approach would be difficult for a casual reader to follow in full; it assumes a knowledge of Roman society and political philosophy such as might be acquired by attending his and others' classes at Edinburgh. Hooke is a prime example of the subversive possibilities of Roman history, the sort of attitude sound teaching could negate, but his critical, cynical close reading of his sources is the sort of painstaking approach we find Bennet of Emmanuel College Cambridge adopting in his line-by-line expositions of Tacitus or Cicero.

Greek Histories – Stanyan, Gast, Mitford and Gillies

Greek history in the eighteenth century tended to valorise rather different periods compared to Victorian and later historiography, and to take a distinctly secondary place in prestige to Roman history overall. Whereas for the modern reader 'classical Greece' tends to be fifth-

173 Pocock, Barbarism and Religion iii 415
174 For full discussion of Bennet, see below, ch.5.pp.114-9
century Athens plus extras – see for example the focus in Greek History of any undergraduate Classics course – the eighteenth century had a particular regard for the fourth century, from the close of the Peloponnesian Wars to the death of Alexander. There are several reasons for this. First of all, Xenophon was held in extremely high regard as a prose stylist and historian, as was Demosthenes; the cult of the fifth-century Attic as the peak of stylistic elegance did not take root until the last years of the century. This development can be ascribed in part to the steady improvement in the standard of Greek throughout the century. Greek texts were added to the Classical side at Trinity College Dublin in the 1750s, and the proportion of Greek authors in the Christ Church Collections increases markedly after that decade, as does the complexity of their language. Thucydides, the foundation of the cult of the Attic, is one of the most difficult classical authors to read, and one of the main reasons for writing ancient history in English was to enable readers to appreciate classical texts more thoroughly; the obstacles to reading Thucydides and the Athenian tragedians earlier in the period were probably not founded primarily in lack of appreciation or historical background, but in linguistic difficulties.

Xenophon's history of the first part of the fourth century takes the reader, in straightforward prose and a reassuringly pro-aristocratic manner, down almost to the rise of Philip of Macedon, and there are several of Plutarch's Lives to fill in the gaps before the two great Macedonian kings, who are also well-attested. This was the era of 'enlightened' monarchs and well-balanced oligarchies, rather than of feuding democracies, and provides a wide variety of striking and interesting characters to give examples of interesting lives. There was less interest than occurred later in the cultural productions of fifth-century Athens; Greek drama was not commonly read in schools and universities until late in the period, and the popularisation of Greek antiquities was likewise an ongoing process, which may be seen in, for example, the growing popularity of Richard Chandler's three volumes of Travels and Antiquities, first published in the 1770s.

Temple Stanyan was the first historian to write in English a continuous history of Greece, separate from a universal history. He was aged only 25 when he completed the first volume, and had recently left Christ Church, which he entered from Westminster School, for a career in the diplomatic service. He left Oxford just before the period begins for which we have records of students' reading, but in the early 1700s there was considerable reading of history and antiquities, both Roman and some Greek, which may be the origin of Stanyan's interest in
he period. Stanyan published one volume, covering from earliest times to the end of the Peloponnesian
War, in 1701, and a very belated second, ranging from the end of that conflict to the death of
Alexander, in 1739, a long enough interval to dedicate the second volume to an unnamed
Archbishop who had read the first as a schoolboy. Despite a long introduction on 'the Truth of
history' which noted that claims for the beginning of historical time in Greece range from
'shortly after the Flood' to 'a little before the descent of the Persians', Stanyan subscribed to
the 'kernel' theory of Greek myth; that under layers of superstition and oral tradition was a
measure of truth in the myths, so for example he had no doubt that Theseus and Hercules had
lived, although they had not done all the deeds ascribed to them quite as the stories relate. He
ascribed the particularly mythic nature of early Greek history to the curious Greek lack of
written historical records; the Egyptians had their hieroglyphs, the Persians the records of the
Magi; even barbarous Rome had its Pontifical Annals, but in Greece the oral tradition endured
until very late on.

After all this skepticism and explanation, Stanyan notes that he will nonetheless begin with
the traditional account and chronology of Greek history and commences his narrative with
Noah's flood, spending around 60 pages on the Heroic Age which, shorn of 'legend and
superstition' still manages to include a sea-monster and Priam of Troy having 50 legitimate
sons by one (or perhaps two) wives. The various Greek cities have their foundation stories
related according to the 'traditional' chronology, with centuries-long gaps abounding. By far
the longest and most detailed section is that on Lycurgus' laws in Sparta, which are lauded in
an extended passage drawn largely from Plutarch, though Stanyan does include a brief gloss
at the end condemning the Spartan institutions for making its citizens adulterous, morose and
terminally aggressive in war. Despite these flaws, Lycurgus is held up as the greatest of
lawgivers and also, interestingly, as making deliberate use of civic religion as a pretext for
bringing in his reforms, by feigning the support of the Delphic Oracle.

(Oxford 2004); online edn, Jan 2013 [http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/26291, accessed
15 Sept 2016]. For the early C18th reading at Christ Church see below, p.124
176 T. Stanyan Grecian History; from the Original of Greece to the End of the Peloponnesian War (2nd Ed.,
London 1739) p.3
177 Ibid. p.44
The second volume takes almost as many pages (340 vs. 410) to cover a mere 80 years.\textsuperscript{178} Stanyan's particular interpretation and purpose thus become somewhat more clear. Much of the book, perhaps a quarter, is taken up with extended 'characters' and biographical anecdotes of important figures. However, Stanyan also includes some extended political reflections. He discusses the imperfections of both the Spartan and Athenian constitutions, observing that whilst both Lycurgus and Solon were near the mark, the one gave too much power to an oligarchy (the ephors), the other, to the people.\textsuperscript{179} He directly contrasts both to the happy medium of Britain, where although party strife exists, it aims to preserve, not upset, an essential balance of power which all agree is necessary. He singles out the Amphictyonic Council as a supranational attempt at providing for a counterbalance to the fickleness of popular assemblies, which proved inadequate without the unifying pressure of Persian invasion.\textsuperscript{180}

His preface discusses the limitations of universal history in general, and of Rollin's \textit{Ancient History}, which Stanyan observes will suffice for young children. For the discerning reader, Rollin's moral reflections are deemed trite, his treatment brief and his selection of material injudicious.\textsuperscript{181} Many of the same criticisms might be levelled at Stanyan himself, but he nonetheless gives a readable and concise account of his period.

A work of similar ambition was produced by John Gast in 1753, giving a one-volume account of Greece from the earliest times to the death of Philip II.\textsuperscript{182} It was cast in a pseudo-dialogue form, i.e. a main narrator, and occasional interjections from another persona, and entitled \textit{The Rudiments of Grecian History}. Gast's interest is neither the mythical period, although he does begin with the sons of Noah, nor either the Persian or Peloponnesian Wars, but rather the origins of the Athenian and Spartan states and cultures, trying to make sense of the mythologised beginnings of both states. A secondary, but important, interest, is 'in taking a View of the Motives and Schemes of Great Persons, the Circumstances they were in, the Means they made use of to establish the Public Prosperity'.\textsuperscript{183} This balance might be said to

\textsuperscript{178} Stanyan, \textit{Grecian History, from the end of the Peloponnesian War}
\textsuperscript{179} Ibid. (xvi)
\textsuperscript{180} Ibid. (x)
\textsuperscript{181} Ibid. (vi)
\textsuperscript{182} J.Gast, \textit{The rudiments of the Grecian history: from the first establishment of the states of Greece to the overthrow of their liberties in the days of Philip the Macedonian} (Dublin, 1753)
\textsuperscript{183} Ibid. p.5
straddle 'traditional' and 'philosophical' ways of writing history; on the one hand, accepted narrative and moral example, on the other, a concern with how successful societies come to be organised and to decay. Gast, like Stanyan, wrote expressly for young readers, covering matter 'with which in the present State of Literature most young persons may be supposed to form some acquaintance'.

Gast was a graduate (1736) of Trinity College Dublin; he had withdrawn from consideration for a Fellowship there in order to marry. His *Rudiments* were recommended by Trinity for the attention of 'young gentlemen at school' and he was awarded a Doctorate 'without expence' on the strength of them. Gast waited thirty years to write a second volume, covering the years from the accession of Alexander the Great to “the present day”, though in practice everything after 396AD occupies a total of three pages, and the detailed narrative ends with the completion of the Roman conquest of Greece, which is presented as a disaster for a region beginning to recover from the Macedonian oppression only to find it replaced by an oppression both longer and worse.

It is interesting to note that both Gast and Stanyan had a decidedly jaundiced view of Philip II, who became almost a model ancient monarch for his biographer Thomas Leland, and still more so for the next major British historian of Greece, William Mitford. Gast's view of Philip was more nuanced; the positions were very much reversed regarding Alexander the Great, whom Gast treats with vehement disapproval.

Mitford had a long afterlife in the nineteenth century as the epitome of everything that was wrong with the English tradition of gentlemen-historians in the brave new world of German philology; he was relatively uncritical in his use of sources and held Xenophon in particularly high regard which by later standards was unjustified. His monumental five-volume history was cutting-edge when volume one appeared in 1780, and rather obsolete by the eventual emergence of volume five in 1818. Educated at Cheam and Queen's College, Oxford, he did almost all his work from a country estate in Hampshire, rarely visiting London and taking little part in the scholarly community. There is limited evidence of his studies at Queen's, where the college lectures seem to have been heavily theological in nature, but Mitford's

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185 J.Gast, *The history of Greece, from the accession of Alexander of Macedon, till its final subjection to the Roman power* (London 1782)
popularity in the 1780s-1800s, when Greek authors were increasingly popular in universities, suggests he ought to be considered alongside the university men and textbook authors; the first volumes of his History went into at least seven editions over fifty years.

In many ways, Mitford's first and last volumes stand apart from the middle three. The first is essentially a conjectural history of early Greece. It draws extensively on the chronological work of Isaac Newton to remove some of the extraneous centuries from the 'traditional' chronology favoured by the universal historians as well as Stanyan and Gillies. Whilst Newton and Mitford's total ignorance of Mycenae, which was not yet rediscovered, led them to rather underestimate the age of Greek civilisation, once past the Trojan War their revised chronology was much closer to that developed by modern scholars, albeit for the wrong reasons. Mitford accepts the 'kernel' theory, but is much more willing to discard implausible details than Stanyan and comes up with some ingenious rationalisations. Hercules, for example, is not presented as a demigod but as the leader of a band of archaic knights-errant who went about Greece 'opposing oppressors, relieving the weak and slaying wild beasts'.

The first volume includes extensive discussion of the roots of Greek religion, the political organisation of the archaic states, which Mitford says were all limited monarchies with some form of popular assembly, the problems of their history, and the beginnings of Greek interaction with the wider Mediterranean world, ending with the establishment of the classical Athenian constitution by Solon. This was seen at the time as one of the prime examples of 'philosophic history' in action; Mitford knew Gibbon and consciously modelled his style on that of his former superior officer in the Hampshire Militia. The last volume is to all intents and purposes a biography of Alexander the Great, covering little outside of his campaigns from his perspective.

Three features distinguish the three volumes which make up the body of Mitford's *magnum opus*. The first is that the broad, 'philosophic' scope of the first volume vanishes completely. There is no cultural or social history, merely a tight focus on politics. This might not be exceptional in a history of any other society, but a history of Greece which barely mentions Aeschylus or the Parthenon was felt, even in Mitford's own time, to be a poor sort of

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188 Ibid. i 179
189 Taylor, *Mitford and Greek History* p.178
history. Second, there is a real sense of moral outrage about ancient slavery. Mitford acknowledges that the citizens of Greek *poleis* enjoyed an enviable degree of civic liberty, but seldom mentions it without referring to the ten slaves who supported every citizen. The democratic state is only possible because slaves are doing the work whilst their masters deliberate, and the ease of having all work done by slaves makes the free citizens indolent and degenerate. This is not solely an anti-democratic talking-point; Mitford notes that the aristocrats and oligarchs of Greece equally rested their fortunes on slave labour, though he remarks that at least an oligarchy *could* have abandoned slavery, an option not available to a classical democracy. A tendency to oppress the helots is noted as an effect of the Spartan constitution; as they were owned by the state rather than any individual, no individual had any real interest in their welfare. However, this is claimed on the basis of Plutarch's *Life of Lycurgus* to have been a side-effect of the original system, where a limited supply of helots would have made them valuable, before Lycurgus' successors ignored his advice about eschewing permanent conquests.

The third truly distinctive feature in Mitford's work is his absolute antipathy to democracy. No eighteenth-century author would have entirely endorsed Athenian direct democracy as a political system, and the degree to which Mitford differed from his contemporaries would be easy to overstate, but his consistency is still remarkable. It is not, however, entirely surprising, given that the volumes in question appeared between 1790 and 1808, when fears of the consequences of excessive democratic influence were at their height. Mitford wrote the fourth volume while on active service in the militia, preparing for what still seemed like a democrat revolutionary army to land on the South Downs. The constitution of Solon is repeatedly described as 'a fount of evil' because its many good qualities caused the essential, disastrous flaw – the dominance of the popular over the aristocratic element – to be readopted despite the evidence that it was bound to lead to disaster yet again.

John Gillies' more concise *History of Ancient Greece* might be considered more of the same. It began with a dedicatory preface addressed to George III:

> The History of Greece exposes the dangerous turbulence of

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190 Ibid. p.274  
191 Mitford, *History of Greece* i 404  
192 Ibid. i 313  
193 Ibid. i 318  
194 Ibid i 400 and *passim*.  
Democracy and arraigns the despotism of Tyrants. By describing the incurable evils inherent in any Republican policy, it evinces the inestimable benefit, resulting to Liberty itself, from the lawful dominion of hereditary Kings and the steady operation of well-regulated Monarchy.

It goes on to praise George III's patronage of useful learning, such as was the glory of the Greek states. Here we have two key aspects of Gillies' work; the importance of his approach to democracy, and the interest in 'useful learning'. At regular intervals in the narrative, Gillies interrupts the politics to give a chapter on some aspect of Greek culture, and laments the fact that Greek authors of the classical period say so little about the cultural flowering which surrounded them, meaning that much has to be reconstructed from late and imperfect authorities.\(^{196}\)

Gillies stands out from the other authors considered in this chapter in that he was a working teacher of ancient history; briefly a lecturer in Greek at Glasgow as a young man, and a travelling tutor for several years after. In the former post, his duties would have been mainly the teaching of the elements of the Greek language. However, there is no evidence of his having taught Greek history, save that we know a class of Greek Antiquities was occasionally held at Edinburgh where records are more complete, which is usually assumed to have been taught by the Professor of Greek. The role of the Greek and Humanity professors is discussed at greater length in Chapter 7 below.

Gillies is not so passionate as Mitford in his condemnation of democracy. Indeed, he often seems to be rather supportive of democratic Athens. If the Athenian constitution was deeply flawed, nonetheless the flowering of Athenian culture in the years following the restoration of the democratic constitution shows 'so advantageous to the powers of the human mind is liberty even in its most imperfect form.'\(^{197}\) It is hard to imagine Mitford considering the Athenian oligarchs any less friendly to liberty than the democrats. Perhaps some of the difference lies in varying interpretations of the constitution of Solon; Gillies considers this a true mixed constitution between the aristocratic and democratic elements; Mitford does not. Gillies traces the descent into mere democracy and the rise of instability to the well-meaning reforms of Pericles, who addressed short-term problems, namely a dearth of aristocratic talent and the poverty of many citizens due to the impact of war, with permanent and destructive

\(^{196}\) Ibid. i 172
\(^{197}\) Ibid. i 267, 410
democratising solutions.\textsuperscript{198}

Ultimately, it is not the form of government that Gillies considers most important; he dates the loss of Greek liberty not to the decline of a particular constitutional type, but to the Greeks being 'unable or unwilling to draw that line between the power of government and the liberty of the subject, a line which forms the only solid barrier of an uniform, consistent and rational liberty.'\textsuperscript{199} In other words, the form of government mattered less than its tendency to grow absolutist under pressure, to which all Greek governments were equally liable. Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that Gillies admires Philip of Macedon who, if unwholesome in his private life, was a sufficiently effective politician and general to put a stop to emergencies and left his son in a position to get the Greeks pulling together for the first time in two centuries.\textsuperscript{200} A third perspective on Athenian liberty comes from Gast, who is by far the most admiring of the three; for all the dangers of populism, the Areopagite council and other checks in the constitution functioned as designed at least for a time, and only true liberty could have allowed the cultural flowering of Athens:

> Genius is as it were licentious, it loves to sport itself after its own wanton manner, neither exposed to the Jealousies of Tyrants nor to the Threats of Laws. It is then only that the Mind becomes capable of the wide-expatiating View and the bold-towering Thought.\textsuperscript{201}

In summary, then, Greek history was less contested than Roman, if only because it was far less familiar and widely-studied. We have seen that schoolboys read Roman history, both as language training and as history, if of a fairly basic sort. They did not read nearly as much Greek, the standard of Greek language was considerably lower, and not much of what they did read was history. There is relatively little evidence of Greek history being taught in universities, or even of Greek historians being read there – very little before the 1780s. A change in the popular conception of Roman history could be a change in every educated man's view of politics and society; the stakes in Greek were much lower until the very last years of our period, and the extremity of Mitford's anti-democratic position, whilst understandable in the context of the Revolutionary Wars, was nonetheless overstated by Victorian critics eager to show how far scholarship had come.\textsuperscript{202}

\textsuperscript{198} Ibid. i 448, 461
\textsuperscript{199} Ibid. ii 88
\textsuperscript{200} Ibid. ii 438
\textsuperscript{201} Gast, \textit{Rudiments} p.363
\textsuperscript{202} Taylor, \textit{Mitford and Greek History} p.287
However, we do find two areas of genuine dispute, aside from the rather technical matter of traditional versus Newtonian chronology. These boil down to debates over the significance of Athens and Macedon; the former has already been discussed, and is the more significant in that the authors of Athens, if not its history as such, were increasingly taught in universities, which necessitated some understanding of their society.

A final interesting area of debate is the characterisation and significance of Philip and Alexander of Macedon. Mitford and Gillies are broadly admiring of the effectiveness (if not the personal morals) of both; Stanyan deeply impressed by Alexander. Gast, by contrast, sees both among a succession of interfering outsiders who are the perpetual downfall of the Greek states – one of them will always invite external powers to sway internecine conflicts, and this external influence is invariably fatal to Greek liberty. The unique exception given is the Persian War, where the Greeks for once managed to band together and resist effectively.

I do not mean to suggest that college tutors pored over Mitford or Gast to decide what they would tell their charges about Pericles, or Alexander, for there is no evidence of that, but these contemporary publications for adult audiences are the best way we have of determining the attitudes to the ancient world which were taught. It is important to remember at this point that Gillies was a Glasgow graduate as well as briefly a lecturer, and Gast and Mitford were graduates of Trinity College Dublin and Oxford respectively, so apart from any influence they had on education, their own education may have had considerable influence on their academic views, especially in the case of Gast who wrote his *Rudiments* as a relatively young man, as Stanyan had done fifty years earlier.

In Roman history, to deny the merits of the most democratic aspects would not have been remotely surprising; Ferguson reflects on the absolute necessity of a class system and secure property in similar terms to Mitford and Gillies, but Britons' political self-image was never as bound up in the history of Athens as in that of Rome. Ferguson explained the decline of Rome in a way that was philosophically sound, considering cultural and institutional factors, eschewing mere personalities, and critically defensible. Hooke did the same, but one of those two endorsed the classic Roman system and, by implication, that of Britain still more so. The other explicitly challenged the one in a boldly revisionist account, which could be read with various, and some alarming, contemporary implications.
It may seem unnatural to turn from the radical possibilities of ancient history to its place in the decidedly conservative Anglican universities. However, the radical possibilities of ancient history do seem to have affected what was taught and how, whilst other interpretations received more attention than has been generally acknowledged. By the end of this period, after all, we find Hooke's work appearing in Christ Church examinations, and the English universities fighting back against criticism from Ferguson and Gillies' Edinburgh.

Introduction

Modern studies (see earlier in Ch.1) have challenged the stereotypical view of the eighteenth century as the Dark Age of Oxford, and to a lesser extent Cambridge and Dublin, which rests on a fundamentally modern attitude to what a university ought to be and do. Instead of judging the universities for not yet being their nineteenth- or twentieth-century selves, these newer studies emphasise the variation and range of student experiences at different colleges and times, as well as the amount of sound scholarship and conscientious teaching which, despite general torpor, did nonetheless go on. If Gibbon's famous critique of Oxford had more than a little merit even in 1790, much less in Gibbon's own student days 40 years earlier, if Cambridge was sunk in feuds and Euclid and Dublin was the 'silent sister', they still performed enough of a function to remain important academies and seminaries. Much reform and improvement happened under the surface, and by the time Gibbon's critique was actually published many of its criticisms had at least begun to be answered. Of course, not every jot and tittle of new regulations was obeyed, but the attempt clearly showed a desire to reform and renew the moribund institutions of the university.1 Much valuable work has been done in resurrecting the life of the eighteenth-century English universities, as discussed in the Introduction (pp.14-18), and this chapter builds on the new and richer understanding, ascribed particularly to Dame Lucy Sutherland's studies of Oxford, of each university as a whole.

During the eighteenth century, history began to be an established discipline in these universities and ancient history developed a place of its own both as part of and alongside the classical curriculum. At the beginning of the century examination and teaching at these universities concentrated closely on philosophy. Students studied classics largely as literature, with any actual history somewhat incidental to the reading of ancient historians and politicians, in a continuation of practices already established at grammar schools.

Whilst Oxford had the Camden Professorship of Ancient History, Dublin and Cambridge had

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1 Gibbon's charges were mainly directed specifically at Magdalen, which was and remained into the 1850s among the least active colleges in teaching. The defences of its collegiate teaching when Gibbon's memoirs were published in the 1790s are discussed by R.Darwall-Smith, 'The Monks of Magdalen, 1688-1854' in L.W.B.Brockliss (ed), Magdalen College Oxford: A History (Oxford 2008) pp.307-9. Magdalen is discussed further pp.119-21
no such thing, and the Camden Professor lectured only infrequently and inconsistently, to an audience mostly of Bachelors of Arts, for an MA examination which was largely sunk into disuse.

History as an academic discipline grew over the century, both in terms of a place in the curriculum and as something demanded by students even without the prospect of being examined on it. There was a similar and greater growth in other subjects including classics, mathematics and to a lesser extent the sciences, as philosophy lost its place at the pinnacle of Anglican academic study. This shift can be demonstrated in two ways. First, one can consider the increase in provision of teaching of ancient history at the university level: professors, lecturers, and the growing place of history in degree examinations. Second, it is equally if not more significant to examine the day-to-day work of undergraduates at the college level; their weekly tasks, reading lists and internal examinations.

Alongside what we know to have actually been done is interleaved consideration of some of the many proposals for university reform. As the century went on, these proposals were more likely to include reform of the curriculum to create a place for ancient history. This growth shows the importance of the subject in internal and national conversations about the purpose and merits of a university education, even if the inherent conservatism of the university authorities meant few of the proposed schemes were ever close to adoption.

It is common to compare Oxford to Cambridge. It is not unusual to compare both to the Scottish universities, which were the envy of Europe in the latter half of the eighteenth century. However, the orphan sister of the English system, Trinity College Dublin (TCD), is usually forgotten. In size it was at its largest in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century with around 400 students, although up to half of these were non-resident and appeared only for exams. Trinity, slightly larger than its namesake in Cambridge, was much bigger than any Oxford college, supporting a staff of 17 Fellows (three of them Professors, plus the Professor of Physic) in 1700, rising to 28 by 1750 and further by 1810.² While Trinity thus had fewer Fellows than the largest Oxford and Cambridge colleges, most of these men actually taught, which was not the case at the English universities. It is thus interesting to consider Trinity Dublin's teaching alongside that of the English universities which its statutes and major

² Student numbers: Senior Registrars' Books, TCD MUN/V/27/4. Faculty, see R.B.Macedowell & D.A.Webb Trinity College Dublin, 1592-1952: an academic history p.41
functions so closely resembled; by the middle of the eighteenth century it had evolved a
distinct academic and pedagogical identity. This included a great deal of attention to reading
classical historians, who occupied a disproportionate place in the classical curriculum,
especially in the middle years of the century before Greek verse had to be accommodated in a
crowded syllabus. Those middle years produced, in Edmund Burke, the premier parliamentary
orator of his generation as well as a significant philosopher, in John Gast an important ancient
historian, in Colonel Isaac Barre a 'merely' very good parliamentary orator, and in John Jebb a
leading university reformer, all of whom are discussed in the following chapters.
Chapter 4 – History in the Formal University Curriculum

4.1 Seventeenth-century antecedents

The provision of offices for teachers specifically of History in the Anglican universities was, it is fair to say, small in the eighteenth century. There is, for example, no mention of any British (let alone English) historian or Chair in Laurence Brockliss' article on the European Arts curriculum in the *History of the University in Europe*. At the start of the period, the Camden chair, which was interchangeably referred to as a Readership, Lectureship and Professorship, was the only such post in the British Isles. By 1762, each Anglican foundation had added a Professor of Modern History as well; however, these individuals took such a broad view of their subject that the word 'modern' seems to have been largely superfluous. When Camden endowed the chair that bears his name, he had to counter opposition from the university authorities, who wished his chosen professor to lecture primarily on ecclesiastical history; he reiterated in 1622 that he intended that the holder of his Chair:

(according to the practice of such professors in all the universities beyond the seas) hee should read a civil history, and therein make such observations, as might bee most useful and profitable for the younger students of the University, to direct and instruct them in the knowledge and uses of history, antiquity and times past … not intermeddling with the history of the Church or controversies further than shall give light into those times which hee shall then unfold.

The reference to 'younger students' is interesting; it may refer to undergraduates rather than those reading for the MA, but may also distinguish among undergraduates; younger students were more likely to be of higher social status and not destined for the Church, at Oxford for a humane education rather than with a particular eye to ordination. Such students were also perhaps more likely to have had the opportunity to read widely in ancient history at home, and thus to have developed an interest in the subject, than poorer ordinands. Camden already felt that the 'humaner learning' had been pushed into the background by theological disputation, and his Chair was intended to counter that rather than to offer a new area for theological

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4 J.Walker *Oxoniana* (4vols, London 1809) iv 58. The 'Universities beyond the seas' referred to are probably those of the Low Countries; the two principal candidates for the extremely short-lived equivalent post at Cambridge were both Leiden professors and history was a traditional strength of the Dutch curriculum.
wrangling at a time when the structure and development of the Early Church was a hot topic of theological discussion. Arguably, from the very start history was a gentlemanly aspect of the curriculum, suitable to a higher social if not intellectual class of student than the common run of undergraduates. These upper-class students would be far more likely than their poorer counterparts to take up roles in political life, for which history was always considered a good preparation.

However, under the Laudian statutes of the 1630s it was not undergraduates of any kind but MA students in the first year after taking their BA who were obliged to attend the Camden lectures. Students reading for the degree of Bachelor of Civil Law (BCL) were required by the statute establishing the Camden Chair to attend, but the statutes laying down their whole course of studies merely instructed them 'to give their attention to politics and affairs', which seems closer to the Camden Professor's province than any other. The disconnect between the intended audience and the intended subject material may explain why few Camden Professors lectured, as we shall see, and those who did had small audiences. By the 1660s, it was established that the Camden professor lectured to bachelors working towards the MA, and the Chair's standing was undoubtedly affected by the decline in numbers (and dedication) of such students.

Camden ordained that his Professor should lecture on Lucius Florus, the second-century author of an extremely undistinguished epitome of Roman history based on Livy, 'or other historian of ancient date and repute'. This seems an odd choice; in both style and content it is among the most basic works of classical history, though it does at least offer a continuous narrative from the foundation of Rome to the reign of Tiberius. The intention appears to have been to provide a very basic framework around which to discuss matters in more detail; one thing that lectures on Florus can not have been is simple exercises in translating and expounding the Latin; they would simply be too easy. Some of the original lectures by Digory Wheare survive in the Bodleian; in each lecture he took just a few lines as his text and commented on the places, persons and events mentioned, with frequent analogies to current or recent affairs. In eight years he lectured his way through just 126 sections (roughly 69

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7 Ibid. p.119

8 The author is given by the statute as Lucius Annaeus Florus; some modern scholars have identified the author of the *Epitome* with Publius Annius Florus the poet and modern editions refer to him interchangeably by either name. Ward, *Laudian Statutes* p.23
paragraphs) of Florus' first book, about a quarter of the whole work - and all of Florus in a modern edition takes up only about 150 paperback pages, so the pace must have been slow indeed.9

The next Camden Professor of whom we hear anything much regarding his professional activities, and a useful coda to the Restoration period, is the elder Henry Dodwell (1641-1711, elected 1688, ejected 1691 for failing to take the Oath of Allegiance to William and Mary). Dodwell was an expert on the Church Fathers and the chronology of ecclesiastical history, and had published numerous works on the subject, often in the form of introductions contributed to others' editions of the key authors. He is the only Camden Professor between Wheare and the middle of the nineteenth century to have published his lectures, of which he gave no more than 26 in his near three years' tenure, a rate of roughly one per month of term compared to the two or three a week required by statute – it seems likely that the last three or four published were never delivered due to the political upheavals.10

The introductory lecture is on the merits and methods of chronology, the following six on the Historia Augusta as a whole, especially the debate over the authorship of the various biographies therein, which was already complicated in the late 17th century, and continues to this day. The next nineteen are on the reign of Hadrian, for which the major source is the first part of the Historia Augusta. These last contain extensive digressions on the Roman constitution in theory and practice. Lecture XVIII includes one of the first scholarly attempts at working out where, exactly, Trajan conquered and Hadrian surrendered in their Parthian campaigns, a question which continues to vex scholars today.11 This must be what Camden intended his foundation to be; serious discussion in depth of classical historians not as literature - nobody has ever claimed the Historia Augusta has literary merit - but as history, with particular emphasis on first straightening out the order of events, then using them to explain broader points about political and constitutional principles. Dodwell is critical of his sources, and checks the Historia against epigraphic evidence and against antiquarian works such as the reconstructed Fasti Consulares, the lists of Roman magistrates recompiled in the Renaissance from numerous defective inscriptions and MSS. References to current events are

9 Bodleian MSS Auct. F.5.10-11
arguably present in Dodwell's discussion of Hadrian's court and the Roman succession, but at most are implicit and veiled.

4.2 Mid-eighteenth century stagnation at the University level

To quote Simon Jones in his history of the Camden Professorship 'the four score years which follow the deprivation of Dodwell are the Dark Age of the Camden Chair.'\(^{12}\) Jones could not find much evidence of any Camden Professor lecturing or publishing on history in that period; Thomas Hearne refers to Dodwell's successor Aldworth lecturing 'seldom' and he is probably the subject of Nicholas Amhurst's reference in his bitter attack on Oxford, *Terrae Filius*, to 'history' professors, who never read anything to qualify them for it, but *Tom Thumb, Jack the gyant-killer, Don Bellianis of Greece*, and such-like valuable records.\(^{13}\) Aldworth's successor Sedgwick Harrison gave but four lectures in six years; one inaugural lecture followed nearly four years later by one more on the Division of History, then two 'horridly poor' in which he apparently did no more than dictate notes on Florus. Thomas Hearne, who is the only source for any of Harrison's teaching, was hardly an unbiased witness to University affairs, but Harrison was a fellow Jacobite whom Hearne called 'a very honest man', albeit a very drunken one, so we may take it that his condemnation was deserved. Both times Hearne mentions the topic of Harrison's lecture, it is on Florus, after the exact manner prescribed in the Statute i.e. with students expected to bring their text and note-paper to take careful notes.\(^{14}\) It is not hard to imagine Harrison, who was 'with difficulty brought to lecture', deliberately working to rule in the hope that nobody would ask him to do so again. If so, he was successful at the second attempt.

Richard Frewin, a reputable physician and Camden Professor from 1727-61, is not known to have done even so much as his predecessor, though he spent £100 on books of history 'to qualify him for his post' and left a very substantial library to the Bodleian.\(^{15}\) There is no further record of his lecturing, or otherwise contributing to the life of the University, save by bequeathing his house for the use of the Professor of Medicine; it now serves as Brasenose College's Frewin Court Annex. The question of who was to succeed Frewin seems to have

\(^{12}\) H.S.Jones, 'The Foundation and History of the Camden Chair' in *Oxoniensa* 8-9 (1943-4) pp.169-82


\(^{14}\) H.E.Salter (ed.), *Thomas Hearne's Remarks and Collections* (11vols, Oxford 1880-1919) viii 183

\(^{15}\) *Hearne's Remarks and Collections* xi 436
been asked, once again, without any reference to professional merit, as was common practice when filling elective posts. The Camden Professor was elected by Congregation, like the Professor of Poetry, as Camden had not laid down any selection mechanism at the foundation.\textsuperscript{16} College interest was far more weighty than scholarship, and college voting blocs were considered the basic unit of campaigning. Richard Radcliffe refers to two candidates for the post, one of them his old tutor George Fothergill, Principal of St Edmund Hall, who died shortly before Frewin and left the field open to John Warneford of Corpus.\textsuperscript{17} Both these men were at least authors and scholars, but they were divines, not historians; each published books of sermons which were well-regarded in their time. Warneford, again, is not known to have lectured, nor published anything but sermons; he was a resident clergyman far from Oxford for most of his professorship.\textsuperscript{18}

Much the same may be said of the Regius Professors of Modern History, whose place in a thesis on ancient history may be defended on the grounds that the distinction was at best imperfectly observed in this period. Courses beginning with Tacitus may fairly be said to belong partly to 'ancient history' by any modern definition. The establishment of the Regius Chairs of Modern History at Oxford and Cambridge is a familiar narrative. The posts were created at the instigation of Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London and effectively the government's enforcer in the Church, to meet two ends with one creation. They would encourage the training of young men for government diplomatic service, hence the conflation of Modern History with Modern Languages in the founding statutes, and create a permanent bastion of government interest in the strongly Tory universities, a hugely lucrative plum to reward or encourage loyalty.\textsuperscript{19} The second goal, to say the least, outweighed the first. There is very little record of the duties of the Professors being fulfilled before the turn of the nineteenth century, though as with the Camden Professors, absence of evidence is not necessarily evidence of absence. David Gregory, the first incumbent at Oxford, did obey the founding strictures to lecture regularly to at least twenty nominated scholars, and to report on their progress in both history and languages with a view to their employment in diplomatic

\textsuperscript{16} Ward, \textit{Laudian Statutes}, p.23
\textsuperscript{17} M.F.Evans and J.R.Magrath (eds.), \textit{Letters of Richard Radcliffe and John James} (Oxford 1888) no.5 has a brief account of this election.
\textsuperscript{18} J. Warneford, \textit{Sermons on several subjects and occasions} (Oxford, 1776). This posthumous volume claims in its preface to have attracted an 'unparalleled' volume of subscriptions, suggesting Warneford's reputation in his real profession stood high.
service. However, even Gregory seemed to have more interest in languages than history; only a few of the reports give any detail about the students' reading in modern history, such as the bare reference to how 'West of Christ Church has with incredible pains endeavoured to make himself the master of the history of the last century both of France and England'. West did well out of his studies; he was employed in the secretary of state's office, translated Pindar, and received a brief write-up in Johnson's Lives of the Poets.

At the beginning of our period, in the years from 1715 to the mid-1720s, the major concern of university reformers has traditionally been seen as the Universities' predilection for Jacobitism, especially at Oxford. W.R. Ward, in his comprehensive Georgian Oxford treats Visitation and university reform as solely party-political questions, and the considerably more up-to-date survey in vol.5 of the History of the University of Oxford devotes four long chapters to Oxford in national politics, and one short one to educational reform which barely mentions the first half of the century. There was clearly a political motive to the establishment of the Regius Chairs, and this motive may be seen more clearly in a scheme of 1716 which in many ways anticipated their establishment.

The majority of criticism of the Universities, and particularly Oxford, came from Whig pamphlets and politicians; the criticism concentrated not on the quality of teaching, nor indeed on students at all, (much less specifically on history) but on the 'rebellious spirit' which dominated the colleges, and the idleness and privileges of the fellows, which were claimed to encourage reactionary views. The proposals in question were drafted sometime in 1716, no later than 10 February 1716/7 when Archbishop Wake was replying to correspondence about them, by Thomas Parker (later first Earl of Macclesfield), then Lord Chief Justice and a close ally of the ministry. His draft Bill is a comprehensive reform scheme, and was clarified by a memorandum which was published almost a century later as part of a collection of miscellaneous items on the history of Oxford. Parker proposed that for seven years 'all &

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20 Excerpts are reproduced in O. Browning, 'Dr Gregory's History and Languages Scholars' in Cambridge Review 25/11/1897 – his helpful reference to 'the originals in the Record Office' has produced no obvious candidates.
24 e.g. J. Toland, The State Anatomy of Great Britain (2 vols, London nd (?1717) i 70-4
25 Wake Correspondence, Box 15 ff.9-10 Thomas Parker to Archbishop Wake.
26 G. Gutch, Collectanea Curiosa (2 vols, Oxford 1808) ii 53-75. V.H.H. Green in the History of the University of Oxford V (p.608) refers to this anonymous memorandum as being published in 1759, but the overlap with Temple's draft Bill (which he does not discuss) is very substantial and I am confident it refers to the same proposals; references to the “unsettled state of the University since his Majesty's happy accession” seem to
every Chancellors Vice-Chancellors Doctors & other officers of the said Universities and all Heads of Houses Fellows Students Chaplains Scholars Exhibitioners... which shall become void... shall be & is & are wholly vested in the King's most excellent Majesty.

Royal Commissioners were to discharge this duty, overriding all College, Hall or University Statutes.

In many ways, Parker's scheme is typical of its time in its general attitude to teaching and the curriculum; what is needed is not change, but restoration of the strictness of discipline believed to have existed at and before the restoration. However, there is both a professorship and a lectureship mentioned which involve the teaching of history, both ancient and modern. First, Parker proposed that a 'Regius professorship of the law of nature and nations' ought to be set up along with sundry other lectureships. This would presumably have entailed, at that date, some study of legal history and the classical foundations of European law in general; in order to read natural-law theorists such as Pufendorf, students would need a grounding in history both ancient and modern; both the Edinburgh Chair and Glasgow lectureship in history evolved partly to provide law students with that background. Furthermore, one of the lectureships mentioned in the explanatory memorandum is 'a course of lectures in the development of the English Constitution from Saxon times.' This is not expanded on, and no previous commentator seems to have noticed it, but clearly prefigures the Regius Chairs of Modern History. The intent, in context, is to inculcate in the clergymen of the future a whiggish sense of history, echoing the political considerations behind Gibson's championing of the actual history chairs. There is also a proposal that professors ought to teach private classes 'as happens in other universities' as well as their statutory lectures; the Camden professor would have been among those required to take a class, around a century before that became a universal practice.

Parker's real ideas about furthering education focused on the provision of more professorial lectures – in natural, civil, common and international law, but also in the three branches of philosophy, which included 'a course of experiments in Natural Philosophy', as well as in chemistry, mathematics and practical divinity. He suggested that Professors in all these fields be encouraged not only to lecture but to take in private pupils from among the undergraduates for moderate fees, offering a broader education. Non-curricular professorships already existed

27 Wake Correspondence Box 15 f.10 Parker to Wake.
28 Gutch, Collectanea ii 61
29 Ibid ii 68
in many subjects, but the Professors were often absent, and were often not of much professional distinction. This might have led to a mirror of the situation at Glasgow and Edinburgh, where history was considered partly as a subsidiary to legal training and often taught by Advocates. The provision of professorships in natural, civil and international law (which Parker's scheme supposed would include some English history) would have also provided a curricular need for some consistent study of at least Roman antiquities.  

It is in Parker's secular preoccupations that an impetus for teaching history may be found; as a preparatory to law and government service it was a more 'useful' subject for a gentlemen's university than philosophy or divinity. This indeed was part of the motivation for the establishment of Regius Chairs of Modern History a few years later – and as we have seen previously the definition of 'Modern History' was often taken so broadly as to be meaningless, with the ancient world very much included if and when those Professors taught anything at all in the eighteenth century.

Cambridge, of course, possessed no ancient history professorship in the eighteenth century, only the Regius Modern Historian; the exclusively mathematical nature of the Senate House Examination from the 1740s onwards militated against the development of a strong historical tradition. A History lectureship was established by William Brooke in 1627, with Isaac Dorislaus of Leiden the first incumbent, but it lapsed after just two lectures; his lectures on Tacitus being considered "stored with such dangerous passages, … and so appliable to the exasperations of these villainous times" that Matthew Wren of Peterhouse persuaded the King to ban further lecturing. As there was no mechanism to deprive Dorislaus of the salary, he retained it until his assassination in 1649 by Royalists angered at his hand in drawing up the articles against Charles I. This was one in a long tradition of British professorships of history being founded either on Leiden's example, or by Leiden graduates, or both, along with at least the Camden chair, and the chair of civil history at Edinburgh. The experiment in history lecturing does not seem to have been repeated; the modern-day Professorship of Ancient History at Cambridge was created in the 1890s.

30 See below in ch.6 p.151 and ch.7 pp.166-8
The first four Regius Professors of History at Cambridge gave a total of one lecture between them, Samuel Harris' inaugurating the Chair in 1724. Of the first six men to hold the office, five were Fellows of Peterhouse (a fine reward for destroying the seventeenth-century Chair), including the poet Thomas Gray, and none had published any work of history or given any relevant lectures at the time of their elevation. The one exception to the Peterhouse rule was elevated at the personal request of Lord Bute; Laurence Brockett of Trinity (Regius Prof. 1762-8) gave no reason to the University to deviate from the unbroken pattern of Peterhouse men again, giving no lectures in six years before dying in a drunken riding accident. This, and the notorious absence of Thomas Spence from Oxford, where he set foot only a handful of times in his tenure of over 20 years, led to moves at both Oxford and Cambridge to ensure that the duties of the Chair were fulfilled. Gray produced a grand scheme to lecture on the Sources of History in Latin, which was never executed. According to his biographer, no less than three such schemes were submitted to the Duke of Grafton in his capacity as Chancellor of Cambridge University, one of which was adopted to regulate the 'private lectures given by his successor'.

This undistinguished record of activity by Camden and Regius Professors explains neatly why the provision of the Laudian Statutes at Oxford for the BA examination to include 'selected heads of Greek and Roman Antiquities' was seldom fulfilled – indeed, references to it are vanishingly rare, save possibly the case of Lord Eldon, discussed below. It was difficult to base an examination upon lectures which had not happened with any regularity – it would have been entirely up to the colleges to deliver the requisite teaching internally and the next chapter will show how inconsistent such provision was. It is hard to make any definite statements, given that most of what we know about any given professor's activity rests on only a small number of sources, but it seems clear that Camden's ideal of termly lecture-courses was probably never fulfilled, and certainly not before the 1770s.

4.3 Signs of a Revival of History from the 1770s

After that 'dark age' we find in the 1770s that within three years all three of the history chairs

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33 Searby, History of Cambridge III pp.228-233
35 W.Mason, The poems of Mr. Gray. To which are prefixed Memoirs of his life and writings (2nd ed. London 1775) pp.394-5
36 Ibid. pp.396-7
37 See p.90 below

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at Oxford and Cambridge went to more active occupants. This seems too close a correlation to be purely a matter of an appointments lottery coming up with good candidates at random. The political climate of the 1770s may partially explain the particular flowering of the chairs and of reformist schemes in those years.\(^{38}\) It was a crucial time for the Universities, which under the patronage of powerful Chancellors were in good odour with the government for the first time in many years. In 1715 Oxford had elected the brother of an attainted traitor as Chancellor in succession to that traitor; in 1772 it elected a serving Prime Minister in Lord North. Quite apart from the national political scene, where constitutional questions were at the forefront of debate and 'thus it was, is now, and ever shall be, world without end, amen' was being challenged as a constitutional mantra, both Oxford and Cambridge had new Chancellors with real academic interests. Lord North had been known as a reading man at Trinity College in the late 1740s.\(^{39}\) At Cambridge, the Duke of Grafton, again a powerful political figure and Chancellor from 1768 succeeding the Earl of Bute, who had acquired the Chancellorship just in time to fall from political grace, actually asked Thomas Gray to recommend new regulations for the Chair of Modern History. These were serious men who could be expected to take an interest in their offices, as well as advocate for the universities at the highest level and throw considerable weight behind any reform movement they chose to advocate.\(^{40}\) Admissions were expanding from their historic low, and as we shall see later, the universities were experiencing a new kind of reform movement, directed more at their teaching than their moral turpitude. These reform movements often included a more formal place for History in their projections, and along with the generally improving prospects of the universities may have attracted both better candidates, and more attention to filling the vacancies with active, interested occupants.

Pedagogical concerns and professorial teaching took centre stage in university reform movements around this period, apparently bearing fruit rather quickly. They are evident, but in a minor key, in a pamphlet of 1751 entitled *Free Thoughts upon University Education, occasioned by the present Debates at Cambridge*.\(^{41}\) The debates in question centred on the enforcement of discipline upon Fellow-Commoners; the pamphleteer argues that gentlemen will not attend the universities until they are satisfied that the education is useful and the tutors

\(^{38}\) Womersley, *Watchmen of the Holy City* pp.261-8 discusses the relationship between the universities' recovering political situation and the shift in emphasis of reform movements.


\(^{40}\) Mason, *The poems of Mr. Gray* pp.396-7

\(^{41}\) Anon. *Free Thoughts upon University Education, occasioned by the present Debates at Cambridge* (London, 1751)
worth listening to, and their families will not support them in doing so unless there is discipline. Along with the discussion of discipline, history is specifically held up as a missing part of the curriculum, particularly of interest to gentlemen's sons:

If the Professor of History and Modern Languages was to reside, with proper Assistants, in the University, it is not to be doubted but that a numerous Audience would regularly attend a Course of Lectures, so useful and entertaining … History a study of all others the most entertaining, is so essential … to make up the character of a fine Gentleman. … If our young Nobility and Gentry were well versed in History and Chronology; if they were tolerable Masters of French and Italian and had clear Notions of the several Forms of Government, particularly that of our own Country … what Advantages might not we hope for to our Country, with the true Interests of which they must by these means be so well acquainted? The time that is now, for want of a Capacity to do otherwise, whilst they are making the Grand Tour, consumed in mimicking the Foppery and adopting the Vices of the Triflers and Debauchees of France, would then be employed in conversing with Men of Sense and Experience, and in making observations upon the Customs and Forms of Government of the several countries through which they passed.\(^{42}\)

This is a clear statement of the need for history, although not specifically ancient history, in the curriculum; who needs it, why, and what they would do with it thereafter, as well as of how the university fits into a coming-of-age process. It also explains succinctly why the Chair is entitled 'Modern History and Languages' - both are necessary accomplishments for the gentleman to benefit from foreigners' knowledge and experience. The 'forms of government' are twice referred to in this one paragraph; clearly the ideal history course would entail a systematic overview of political theory or philosophy.

Critiques of teaching and curriculum may be said to have been systematised and more fully articulated in the 1760s and 1770s with three important critiques: from Adam Smith, Vicesimus Knox, and John Jebb. All three had personal experience of the education they critiqued, it is curious to note that both Smith and Jebb had attended more than one university so had a sound basis for comparison – Smith at Glasgow and Balliol, Jebb at TCD and Peterhouse. Knox had attended only St John's College, Oxford.

Knox and Smith, however, essentially make the same criticisms as the reformers of the 1710s-

\(^{42}\) Ibid. p.14
20s; for different reasons, perhaps, but with very similar prescriptions for improvement. Knox has already been discussed in general terms in the Introduction to this thesis. He was in fact slightly less critical of the universities than is sometimes supposed, pointing out at length their good points: facilities, funding, the many conscientious college tutors and the salaried posts which were worthy goals for the ambition of poor men, who could not afford to support themselves while they built up a reputation which would attract fees.

However, Knox's critique of the state of discipline and the quantity as well as quality of academic work is trenchant, and has been quoted so widely as to need no repetition. For Knox, university degrees are essentially useless; they offer neither general nor professional education beyond the level of a good school, and what may be done in them even by a studious undergraduate with a good tutor is no more than what may be done privately by a studious young man with a private tutor. The universities, says Knox, do not 'promote literary improvement and the preservation of the pupil's good morals, finances and character' and are therefore of no use without rapid reform.43

None of this is anything new. Knox repeats the same critiques heard in the 1720s, boiling down to ill-discipline among the students and idleness among the fellows and professors. The twenty 'articles of reform' he proposed in an open letter to Lord North as Chancellor of Oxford University focus on disciplining students by increasing the powers of the College Tutors, and on making the fellows and professors do the jobs set down by statute. There are only three reforms to teaching proposed other than restoration of the old discipline, and only one of them relates in any way to history.44 That one is that the Professor of Modern Languages should reside, with assistants, and teach regularly; however, the fact that the Chair was also that of History is omitted entirely. A second, the regular institution of examinations within the colleges, was already in progress, though never enforced by university regulation as Knox proposed.

Adam Smith's critique of Oxford and Cambridge is also widely quoted. He uses the public professors at Oxford as a contrast to those at Glasgow.45 The former are salaried, the latter live by fees alone, thus creating an incentive for Glasgow's professors to teach constantly, and to maximise the size of their classes, which does not exist at Oxford. In point of fact, most of the

43 V.Knox, *Liberal Education* (5th edn. London 1782) p.433
44 V.Knox, *A letter to lord North annexed to the tenth edition of Liberal education* (London 1789)
Glasgow professoriate were salaried, some generously, and not all of them did teach. However, the majority of Scottish professors did so, and derived most of their income from it; the figures from c.1790-1825 may be found at the beginning of each volume of the *Visitation Evidence*. What Smith may not even have known is that Oxford professors were entitled to charge a fee to at least some of their auditors; exactly who and how much varied, but as mentioned above John James regretted the two guineas the Camden Professor's lectures cost him, and in 1816 Edward Nares (Regius Professor of History at Oxford) was forbidden to charge over one guinea per course. The latter is roughly the same as a session of Adam Smith's Moral Philosophy class would have cost.

However, Smith's larger complaint is that 'The discipline of colleges and universities is in general contrived, not for the benefit of the students, but for the interest, or more properly speaking, for the ease of the masters.' However, Smith has little to say on the subject of what is actually studied – his critique is solely of the lack of teaching. He mentions that he learned little at Balliol, but not what he learned little of. His economic approach to restoring discipline, and his focus on professorial teaching, prefigure the criticisms levelled at Oxford by the *Edinburgh Review* half a century later, but his focus on discipline and the established, statutory curriculum is less forward-looking.

What might be described as a 'modern' critique of the universities began, more realistically, with the chequered career of John Jebb. Initially an undergraduate at Trinity College Dublin, he transferred after just over a year to Peterhouse, Cambridge, where he successively became BA, MA and Fellow before resigning in 1764 in order to marry. Thereafter he served as a parish clergyman in Sussex until 1774 and spent time in Cambridge working as a tutor. From 1770-76 he championed wide-reaching reforms of the University, which failed only narrowly – his third proposal, by just a single vote in the Senate. Jebb's proposals involved a good measure of student discipline and close oversight, like his predecessors, though even this was more concerned with making students work than making them devout - Jebb later became a Unitarian and impatient of ecclesiastical conservatism. Part of Jebb's scheme was to make the

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46 Evidence, oral and documentary, taken and received by the Commissioners for Visiting the Universities of Scotland 1826-30 (4vols. London, 1837)
47 Fees for the ordinary classes at Glasgow were raised from one to two guineas in the 1780s, and from two to three guineas in 1802. Ibid. ii 84. On Smith's class size see ibid. ii 13 and on Nares see below p.89
48 Smith, *Wealth of Nations* V.1.143
classical part of the curriculum more history-focused, as well as bringing history into a more formalised course of studies.

Jebb also adopted the love of competitive examination which was already becoming a trope of educational writing; indeed this is what he has mostly been remembered for. He proposed at least three distinct schemes of reform in those six years, with slightly different schemes of examination, but all of them would have created at least biennial examinations for undergraduates in a variety of subjects.\(^5\) Jebb acknowledged that these were already held at St John's College (since at least 1765) separately from the Tripos exam at the end of the BA, which was taken by only a small minority of students, but he proposed putting examination wholly in the hands of the university, which would be a powerful centralising measure, and rendering it compulsory. At Dublin, students were examined quarterly, as well as at the end of their degrees, in both the arts and sciences course.\(^5\) The copy of the fourth edition of Jebb's *Remarks upon the Present Mode of Education in the University of Cambridge*, has pasted in as a preface a reproduction of a brief newspaper article, recording the examination at Trinity Dublin of 45 freshman students (probably an entire year's intake) by six fellows 'in the regular fashion'.\(^3\)

Jebb's other major reform proposal, and another which lasted through all his various proposals, was to introduce a variety of new subjects to the formal curriculum. He had a particular interest in history, both ancient and modern, as a part of his new curriculum, and all of the many variants of his scheme include a place for it. Along with mathematics, already the staple of the Cambridge curriculum, he added that:

> The pursuit of metaphysical and moral truth is accompanied with numerous advantages, and tends to produce those fruits in public and in private life to which we assign the names of the most honourable virtues... it is to the finished compositions of Greece and Rome that the student must direct his view, if he wishes to excel in just sentiment. The study of History also, that pleasing monitor, which as it instructs us in the errors of the past, affords us the most important documents for the conduct of succeeding ages, is not sufficiently encouraged.\(^4\)

\(^5\) J.Jebb, various pamphlets collected in Bodleian Gough Camb. 67. Other works in this collection are cited with the Bodleian shelfmark.

\(^3\) The TCD Senior Registrar's Books (TCD Muniments MUN/V/27) have a quarterly list of examination returns from the 1710s to 1830s.

\(^3\) Jebb, *Remarks upon the Present Mode of Education* (4th ed.), in Bodleian Gough Camb. 67 (item 4). At least four editions of this pamphlet appeared within a year.

\(^4\) Ibid. p.11
He thus proposed that the examinations should include 'Law of Nature and of Nations, Chronology, History, Classics, Metaphysics Mathematics and Philosophy natural and moral' as well as the existing BA examinations. He specifically proposes a board of examiners to select particular 'Classic Authors and periods in History most deserving of attention', so that all students would study the same, and from the best authors.\textsuperscript{55} Another proposal bound in the same volume divides these into three years' study and distinguishes between ancient and modern history, confirming that both are to be included. Jebb specifically praises how 'the recent institution of a course of Lectures upon Modern History, reflect honour upon the present Professor', particularly taking this as evidence that the student body, including the Fellow-Commoners and Noblemen, are keen to attend university lectures where these are offered.\textsuperscript{56} These are the lectures of Symonds as Regius Professor, which have already been mentioned, and which do not seem to have been always and exclusively 'modern' to the exclusion of the ancient world.

Jebb's proposals eventually made it as far as having a syndicate of senior tutors and Professors appointed to consider them (it reported they were infeasible); however, by 1776 it was apparently felt that Jebb's support was a disadvantage to any motion.\textsuperscript{57} Critics claimed that subjecting the Fellow-Commoners and Noblemen to strict discipline would put them off attending, reducing the social cachet (and the income) of the colleges. If they or their parents wanted rigour, said the author 'B.J.I', let them go to Trinity and St John's, where greater rigour was already in place at the collegiate level.\textsuperscript{58} Powell, Master of St John's, argued that the Colleges were better suited than the University to examine, as they had more knowledge of their students and would not expose the patently incapable to public embarrassment.\textsuperscript{59}

Sir William Scott, appointed in this critical atmosphere as Warneford's successor in the Camden chair in 1773, is generally regarded as one of the best and most active professors of history of his era. He was also a conscientious and active college lecturer at his own University College, where we know that historians, including modern authors, not just

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid. p.15
\textsuperscript{56} Grace submitted to the Senate, 17th February 1774, in Bodleian Gough Camb. 67 (5c)
\textsuperscript{57} J. Gascoigne, 'Jebb, John (1736–1786)'
\textsuperscript{58} Anon. A letter to the author of a proposal to institute public examinations (Cambridge 1774) This is in the Gough collection of Jebb. Bodleian Gough. Camb. 67
\textsuperscript{59} W.S. Powell, An Observation on the Design of Establishing Annual Examinations at Cambridge (Cambridge 1774)
classical ones, were included in the syllabus during his time.\textsuperscript{60} It would be fascinating if more of his materials had survived to compare his college and university teaching.

Unlike his predecessors, Scott lectured frequently and well, although he himself appears to have doubted the utility of lecturing as a means of teaching, agreeing with his close friend Dr Johnson that 'Lectures were once useful; but now, when all can read, and books are so numerous, lectures are unnecessary. If your attention fails, and you miss part of a lecture, it is lost; you cannot go back as you do upon a book.'\textsuperscript{61} He was even praised by Gibbon as a shining exception to the great historian's general condemnation of Oxford 'his lectures on history would compose, if offered to the public, a most valuable treatise.'\textsuperscript{62} Although John James Jr. mentions his lectures being prepared for publication in 1779, this never happened; the lectures which had 'something of the stile of Dr Johnson', doubtless explaining in part why the Great Sage admired them so, are today lost, save for the knowledge that they included courses on the outline of ancient society and the life of Alexander the Great.\textsuperscript{63}

Interestingly, at least some of the attendees had to pay a substantial fee; John James Jr lamented the three guineas he had paid for the Camden Professor's lectures even as he admired their form and content.\textsuperscript{64} This represents a challenge to Adam Smith's famous assertion that Oxford and Cambridge professors were indolent precisely because they were salaried rather than feed. The Camden Professor's salary was certainly generous at £140, but lower than the earnings of, say, Adam Smith from his lecturing. If we assume Scott had a similar audience to Symonds at Cambridge (c.25 a term) and that they all paid termly, he would have doubled his Professorial salary by lecturing for half the year.\textsuperscript{65}

Scott, a successful barrister and judge, resigned his Chair in 1785, and was succeeded by Thomas Warton, far better known as a Poet Laureate and Professor of Poetry. Warton's inaugural lecture was thoughtful, measured and scholarly, but unlike his immediate

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\textsuperscript{60}\textit{See p.111-2 below}
\textsuperscript{63} \textit{Letters of Richard Radcliffe and John James} no.37
\textsuperscript{64} Ibid. loc. cit.
\textsuperscript{65} Jones 'Foundation and History of the Camden Chair' p.175, bearing in mind the holder would also hold a college fellowship with an income. Cf. \textit{Visitation Evidence} ii 304-11 which gives a history of the pay scale at Glasgow; when Adam Smith wrote \textit{Wealth of Nations} his nominal salary was around £100. Even under Smith's less famous successors for whom more accurate class sizes are available, the Moral Philosophy class at Glasgow never shrunk below 78 students (ibid. ii 527) paying a fee of a guinea apiece, and he also gave private classes and extra-mural lectures at various times in his career.
\end{flushright}
predecessor he delivered it in Latin. The lecture lamented how outdated Camden's attachment to Florus was, as well as Warton's own unfitness for the job, and proposed to tackle the great historians in terms of their literary style, form, structure and contribution to political science. Warton gives thumbnail summaries of the most significant according to those criteria. Herodotus and Livy are most highly praised for combining insight and literary style, but the importance of Polybius and Tacitus is acknowledged despite their lack of literary merit. This noble intent, sadly, was not matched by any more lectures. Warton did, however, publish a rather miscellaneous collection of historical works: a guide to the history of the University, local histories of Kidlington and Winchester (intended as specimens of a projected work on Oxfordshire), and the first volume of a history of English poetry from the 11th to the 17th centuries. His successor Thomas Winstanley, however, is not known to have lectured or published at all in his long tenure from 1790-1823, unless we are to identify him with Copleston's reference to 'the professor of History' taking a picked class through the uncharted waters of political economy – it is far more likely, however, to refer to the Regius Professor of Modern History; Henry Beeke, appointed to that Chair in 1801, was a noted economist who calculated the income tax base of England and Wales for Pitt in 1799.

Occasional references suggest that by this time some Regius historians and their deputies were teaching. Godley in *Oxford in the Eighteenth Century* refers to the deputy appointed by Thomas Nowell (Regius Prof. 1771-1801) giving private tutorials to Gentlemen Commoners, a practice discussed below, which at least indicates that a deputy existed (a fact of which we might otherwise be unaware) and that, perhaps surprisingly, he attempted to teach something. James Hurdis, probably referring to the same incumbent in his *Vindication of Magdalen College*, also refers to the Professor 'giving without interruption public and private lectures, in person for the most part and by substitute when his imperfect health confines him at home'. When Hurdis wrote in 1800, the elderly Nowell was dying and we may presume the assistant was extensively employed. It was common practice in the scientific professorships for the

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70 J. Hurdis, *A word or two in vindication of the university of Oxford and of Magdalen College in particular from the posthumous aspersions of Mr. Gibbon* (Oxford 1801) p.36.
lectures and demonstrations to be delegated to a younger man, who would receive any fees paid by students for the lectures, with or without a share of the salary. The same practice was common, albeit often complained about, in Scotland, where an elderly, infirm or absent Professor might persuade his University to appoint an 'assistant and successor' who would do the work, receive the fees and inherit the professorship (i.e. the title and salary) itself when the incumbent died.71

At Cambridge after 1771, John Symonds and William Smyth were far more active. Both, according to Thomas Winstanley, were at times requested by the University authorities to limit their audience and to lecture less, as they were taking undergraduates away from their mathematical studies.72 There must be some record of this other than Winstanley's statement but he does not give a reference; I have been unable to locate one, save for Smyth's complaint in 1835 that the sum total of History lectures had always been confined to Michaelmas Term only.73 Symonds, Professor from 1771-1807, was appointed as a zealous Whig and, rather unusually, actually published some works on history. These comprised a short monograph on Roman agriculture and a pamphlet on the relationship between ancient states and their colonies, attempting to demonstrate that there had been no taxation of the Greek and Roman colonies by the metropolis.74 The latter was obviously intended as an intervention in the American question on the side of the colonists, couched as a direct reply to William Barron's pro-government pamphlet of the previous year. If semi-independent colonies had been good enough for Greece and Rome, they ought to be good enough for England also. Philip Yorke spoke well of his lectures and of the fact that Symonds was willing to explain the more complicated points to him in private afterwards. Of course, as Searby notes in the History of Cambridge University, the heir to the Earl of Hardwicke would rate a good deal of special treatment from even the laziest of professors.75 It is in Symonds' time that we hear of Cambridge undergraduates being publicly examined in history for the first time: a classical element, including 'questions in history, antiquity and geography' appeared in the examinations for the four prestigious University Scholarships (two Craven, one Browne and

71 See below, chapters 6 and 9, for further examples of this trend.
73 Quoted in K.A.Betty, A 'Petty' Professor of Modern History: William Smyth (1765–1849)' in Cambridge Historical Journal vol.9 no.2 (1948) p.229
74 J.Symonds, Remarks upon an essay intituled The History of the Colonization of the Free States of Antiquity (London, 1778). The piece on Roman agriculture is in four parts in Annals of Agriculture and Other Useful Arts nos. ii (1785) and iii (1787)
75 Searby, History of Cambridge III p.236
Despite the title 'Professor of Modern History', Symonds lectured on a variety of topics in general terms, from 'the first Four Empires' onwards, varying his topics year-on-year; in the absence of a meaningful examination on classical history or a strong tradition of classics teaching in many of the colleges, he was free to extend his subject as far back or sideways as he liked. Sadly, according to his successor, 'it is to be lamented that a little before his death he destroyed the lectures he had delivered, and all his historical papers', though his valuable library was bequeathed to the Chair, and now forms part of the Cambridge University Library collection.

The publication of Gibbon's memoirs provoked a brief flurry of rebuttals, mixed in with repetitions of the old critiques. Increasingly, the expense of an English university education was criticised. A pamphlet of 1787 is typical of this period; entitled Remarks on the enormous expence of education at Cambridge University, it proposes strict control of students' movements and expenditures by means of a wide-ranging scheme of disciplinary reform, or rather restoration. However, this pamphlet, like others of its period, also proposes 'examinations in university-learning including the Studies of Antiquity.' Strictures on the Discipline of the University of Cambridge, five years later, proposed that students be allowed to choose which branch of learning they should primarily pursue, from mathematics, moral philosophy, classics, or history, 'which supplies the room of experience and furnishes us with prudence at the expense of others'. This is effectively a pre-figuring of the 'major' system which evolved in the US over the nineteenth century, and one of the most radical curriculum reforms proposed at any British university in the period under discussion; it seems, perhaps unsurprisingly, to have sunk without trace.

William Smyth, succeeding Symonds at Cambridge, gave the same, gradually evolving course of thirty-six lectures every year, most likely every day of the week except Sunday for one of the short terms, as the lectures frequently refer to topics discussed 'yesterday' 'tomorrow' or 'next week'. These covered the sweep of European history from late Rome to the end of the

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76 The Cambridge University calendar 1802 (Cambridge 1802), pp.xlv and 57-63
77 W.Smyth, Lectures on Modern History from the irruption of the Northern nations to the close of the American Revolution (2nd ed. 2vols London 1840) i 24
78 Anon. Remarks on the enormous expence of education at Cambridge University (London 1787) p.29
79 Anon. Strictures on the Discipline of the University of Cambridge (London 1792) p.45
American Revolution; a version was published in 1840, with the individual lectures dated between 1809 and 1811. Unlike Symonds, therefore, Smyth recognised a distinction between 'ancient' and 'modern' history and lectured on the latter. However, his course contained a good deal of what we would now consider 'ancient history', beginning as it did with the state of the Roman Empire in the early third century and continuing with much on the later Empire and late antiquity. A course whose author assumes a foundational knowledge of classical history (see below) and begins with Tacitus can hardly be excluded from a consideration of ancient history teaching, and tells us a good deal besides about how 'history' as a whole was conceived of as a taught subject.

These lectures are something of a new departure in the teaching of history. In the introductory lecture, Smyth sets out two unsatisfactory ways of teaching history by lecture-courses. He could attempt to give an outline of world history in the manner of a universal historian, setting out his theories of the grand sweep of human development, or he could select particular periods or closely-connected periods and give detailed lectures on them. The former he rejected as impossible for any one man to accomplish adequately, certainly in the interval between his appointment and inaugural lecture (less than ten months). The latter, which would require intense attention to detail, would work far better in book than lecture form (He later reversed this opinion and introduced a separate course on the French Revolution, which began at some time between 1815 and 1825, and when published in 1841 occupied three substantial quarto volumes).

Smyth therefore resolved on a third way, a series of lectures which would indeed cover the high points from the third century AD to the American Revolution. These lectures worked as a series of more or less self-contained episodes one to three lectures long, and were intended mostly as a guide to the best books available on their topics. In this way, a busy student with little time to read history could come away with a vague sense of what went on, and a busy but more interested student would be furnished with necessary background information and the shortest possible reading-list. In fact, one of the most interesting aspects of Smyth's lectures is the reading-list, which was published in 1817, 23 years before the text of the lectures came out, and is divided into three parts – an essential minimum outline of European

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80 Ibid. the general scheme is set out pp. 6-22
81 W. Smyth, Lectures in History: Second and concluding series, on the French Revolution (3vols, Cambridge 1840)
history, an extended list, and sub-sections on each lecture topic.\textsuperscript{82} The 'minimum' list contains just 19 works, about half of them confined to particular chapters; the ancient world is represented by five chapters of Gibbon and by Butler on the ancient German Constitution. The vast majority of the books listed, constituting a total of 48 in the 'general' list and several hundred in the sub-sections, are in English, some in French, very few in Latin or German; it is a highly modern collection for 1809 or 1828, although the 'updates' section in the 1840 edition is rather slim, and it could easily have remained in use as an undergraduate bibliography well into the late 19\textsuperscript{th} century.

It is worth mentioning two things about Smyth's attitude to ancient history in particular, which occur in the lecture on 'Romans and Barbarians', dated 1809. First, 'Ancient history is not excluded; a knowledge of it is pre-supposed in the study of modern history; a knowledge at least of those events which can now be ascertained, and of those nations more particularly whose taste, philosophy, and religion are still visible in our own. Ancient history at last conducts us to the exclusive study of the Romans.'\textsuperscript{83} In other words, Smyth feels safe in assuming that his auditors have a working knowledge of Greek and particularly Roman history; the 'events which can now be ascertained' would exclude the earlier Empires and the world beyond the Mediterranean from Smyth's confidence. This is not necessarily a safe assumption for Cambridge in 1809; by 1840 it would perhaps be rather more so, as the Classics Tripos by that time was securely established.\textsuperscript{84} The other remark particularly relevant to ancient history is on the importance of deducing historical evidence from non-historical works. Smyth uses as his example Julius Caesar on the tribes of the Rhine; although he did not set out to write an ethnographical treatise, one can deduce almost as much about barbarian Germany from the Gallic Wars as Tacitus tells plainly in the \textit{Germania}. Due to the preponderance of available literature of all kinds, ancient history as a study is peculiarly suited to foster this skill; 'it is one thing to know their beauties and their difficult passages, and another to turn to our own advantage the information they contain' as he says of Tacitus and Caesar. Hume's essay \textit{On the Populousness of Ancient Nations} is held up as the preeminent example of this sort of scholarship.\textsuperscript{85}

\textsuperscript{82} W.Smyth, \textit{A List of Books Recommended and referred to in the Lectures on Modern History} (Cambridge 1815, revised and expanded editions, 1817, 1823, 1828)
\textsuperscript{83} Smyth, \textit{Lectures in Modern History} i 26
\textsuperscript{84} The Classics Tripos was introduced in 1822 and did not become absolutely equal to Mathematics until 1854. See Brooke, \textit{History of Cambridge} iii 66-167
\textsuperscript{85} Smyth, \textit{Lectures in Modern History} i 29-31
In the 1810s, at a time of widespread criticism of Oxford and Cambridge in the press, the government of the day intervened to set down new regulations for the conduct of regular lectures.\textsuperscript{86} The instructions came as the \textit{Edinburgh Review} was excoriating the old-fashionedness and indolence of the English universities, and as the smallest of examination reforms at Oxford were occasioning bitter pamphlet wars among dons and reformers. They may represent a gesture of recognition that some of these criticisms were accurate and required action. Whereas previous references to the Chair are often to 'history', the phrase 'modern history' is much repeated in these instructions and thus indicates, as we have seen with Smyth, a growing distinction between the ancient and modern, though we know less in this case about where and how the distinction was drawn.

The new Professor, Edward Nares, was obliged from the beginning of his lecturing career in 1816 to give a course of twenty lectures each year, plus four Solemn Lectures on some combination of 'Method of Reading Modern History; Political Biography; Political Economy; Diplomacy or International Law &c.' The Solemn Lectures were to be free for all members of the University, the course to charge a fee of not more than one guinea. The Professor would forfeit £10 of his salary for every solemn lecture omitted, and £100 if he failed to give a full course. This would still leave a totally idle Professor with a stipend of £260, so a provision was added that he could not be paid at all without a certificate from the Vice-Chancellor that he had done his best to fulfil his duties. His commencement was delayed two years from his appointment in 1814 to enable the regulations to be officially drawn up and give him time to prepare an appropriate first course.

Nares, however, ceased to lecture in 1832, making the excuse that he had been unable to attract an audience when his course clashed with exam revision.\textsuperscript{87} Whereas Smyth had found his niche in Cambridge and seems to have been undaunted by sometimes small audiences and official indifference to extra-curricular lectures, these factors combined to limit the teaching of modern (and to an extent ancient) history in Oxford until the 1850s. History had, by the 1810s come as far as it could at university level in Oxford and Cambridge without being formally incorporated into an increasingly demanding curriculum. Whilst there were still many students who did no work, those were unlikely to attend extra-curricular lectures, and those who did work found that the Honours course occupied too much of their time to attend long courses of

\textsuperscript{86} Oxford University Archives WPβ/11/3
\textsuperscript{87} Ibid., and Firth, \textit{Modern History in Oxford} pp.20-1

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history lectures. Although little more teaching was being provided at university level, most work was always done in the colleges and the level of teaching there generally increased to meet the requirements of the honours schools whilst at Cambridge the Tripos became more competitive.

4.4 Ancient history in examinations 1800-1810

In theory, under the pre-1801 Oxford system, students were required to be examined in three classical literary works of their choice, of which at least one had to be in each of Latin and Greek. There was thus no place for history, whether ancient or modern, save the chance that a candidate might choose to be examined on a historical work. The examination, however, was the merest formality, as it was only ever attended by the examiners, who could be chosen by the candidate from all the MAs resident in the University. Lord Eldon, then John Scott, famously said that his examination consisted in its entirety of the following:

‘What is the Hebrew for the place of a skull?’ I replied 'Golgotha.' 'Who founded University College?' I stated (though, by the way, the point is sometimes doubted) 'that King Alfred founded it.' 'Very well, Sir,' said the Examiner, 'you are competent for your degree.'

In actual fact, Eldon's account does not follow the usual form of examination described above. It may be that his examiners were making fun of him, or that he exaggerated for his memoirs; or that, as he had already been elected to a Fellowship, it was felt unseemly to press him too hard. Equally, it is possible that this was not the formal university BA exam, but the 'screening' colleges were supposed to conduct to ensure their students were competent, before issuing permission to sit the exam proper; these varied widely in form, and were often not held at all, though at Christ Church they were something of an institution and regarded by the 1800s with more respect than the pass examination itself.

The Oxford examination system, having been the subject of numerous complaints, was finally reformed in a substantial manner by a new Examinations Statute in 1801. The new system, however, did not add very much in the short term. The pass-examination was trivially easy still, although simplified in form. The honours examination introduced for the first time was

88 See L.S.Sutherland 'The Curriculum' in Sutherland and Mitchell (eds), History of the University of Oxford V pp.469-92
89 H.Twiss, The Public and Private Life of Lord Eldon (3vols, London 1839) i 57
90 E.G.W.Bill, Education at Christ Church 1660-1800 (Oxford 1988) p.223
considerably more searching, though still based on classics; however, by 1810 it was still attracting only single-figure numbers of candidates each year, perhaps 1-2% of all Oxford undergraduates.\textsuperscript{91} There appears to have been no requirement of studying particular authors; the examination in Grammar, which in theory formed only one of five parts at the BA level, simply required 'in Humane Literature... one in the Greek and Roman writers, three of whom at the fewest, of the best age and stamp are to be used.' The examination was in the grammar and perhaps content of the works, not in their interpretation, so offering historians did not mean an examination on history was inevitable or even probable. The MA examination under the New Statute was barely attended, ceased to be public by 1807, and ceased existence entirely by 1810; the revisions of 1810 and 1828 did not restore it. It was the MA which was intended to provide for the teaching of History, and thus there was no real change to the status of history in the formal university-wide curriculum.\textsuperscript{92} Despite the more classical orientation of Oxford relative to the other universities, history remained largely a matter for college teaching and the taste of individual students or college tutors rather than a subject of formal examination.

The period of agitation for curricular reform does not end with the adoption at Oxford of these two successive reforms of the examination system but continues with attacks on the English universities by, inter alia, the \textit{Edinburgh Review} in the 1810s. These have been widely written about already, particularly by the \textit{History of Oxford University} and by Heather Ellis in her recent book \textit{Generational Conflict and University Reform}, and the critiques do not particularly mention history as one of the studies found wanting.\textsuperscript{93} In general, it is still the indolence of Oxford's professors and the indiscipline of its students that are criticised, with the addition of a pointed critique of the curriculum on utilitarian grounds – that it was useless, obsolete, and badly-taught at that. Knox's balance between general and professional education was explicitly applied to the universities, whose purpose was conceived in broader terms than simply the education of gentlemen-politicians and divines. The practical element was found non-existent – in particular, the near-total lack of Divinity for prospective clerics. The general was likewise considered obsolete; philosophy might be an enlarging study, but not the philosophy of two centuries ago, which seemed crabbed and conservative to critics raised on

\textsuperscript{91} V.H.H.Green, 'Reformers and Reform in the University' in Sutherland & Mitchell (eds.) \textit{History of the University of Oxford V} p.635
\textsuperscript{93} H.Ellis, \textit{Generational Conflict and University Reform: Oxford in the Age of Revolution} (Boston, MA 2012)
Various replies to the criticism, however, raised some interesting counter-points. Edward Copleston in his well-known *Reply to the Calumnies...* redefined liberal education expressly as a non-specialist education, whose value lay in its difficulty, impracticality and removal from mere present concerns.  

Old philosophy, classics and pure mathematics were mental training and discipline; a student who could master them would find contemporary studies a breeze in comparison. Copleston describes the workings of the 1810 examination statute, explaining that college schemes of work vary sharply, depending both on the proclivities of the tutor and the abilities of the student; thus the only curriculum that can be compared across colleges and universities is the formal examination system. In its revised form, Copleston claims that the range of study prescribed from 1810 for Oxford students compares well to those of Edinburgh and Cambridge, being better adapted to fit his concept of a 'liberal' education than that of Edinburgh, but still broad within those limits, encompassing basic Greek, Divinity and Logic, primarily in the General Sophs, the new second-year exam which replaced the old disputations, alongside Classics as the main body of the examination.

Whilst Copleston's account of the course of studies for examination has no mention of history, and indeed explicitly states the main focus of the examinations is literary, the fifth chapter of his *Reply* does include encomia of the study of ancient history, and how it fits into the classics course. Defending the professionalism of Oxford professors (considerably improved from fifty years earlier) he gives the example of the Professor of History who has lately expanded his course to include separate lectures on Political Economy. This was no small claim; only Glasgow and Edinburgh had a separate class of political economy distinct from moral philosophy, and neither seems to have met every year.

Copleston also goes on to defend the study of ancient historians, in particular Thucydides and Xenophon, which constitutes 'a manly and generous discipline' which 'breeds and fosters those noble sentiments: to make them feel what they owe to their country in a land of freedom, what their country expects from them.' This would offer the student the most powerful examples of party-spirit, anarchy, enthusiasm, and patriotism, set out both in general and in detail, with

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94 E. Copleston, *A reply to the calumnies of the Edinburgh review against Oxford: Containing an account of studies pursued in that university.* (Oxford 1810) pp.104-119 and 165-82  
95 Ibid. pp.136-47  
96 Ibid. p.154
their root causes, as well as how statesmanship may and should be combined with private
culture and literature. He added, 'from no study can an Englishman acquire a better insight
into the mechanism and temper of civil government: from none can he draw more instructive
lessons, both of the danger of turbulent faction, and of corrupt oligarchy: from none can he
better learn how to play skilfully upon and how to keep in order that finely-toned instrument, a
free people.'\textsuperscript{97} Whilst this is in many respects a traditional view of history as a training for
statesmanship, it identifies ancient history as a unique strength of Oxford, and defends its
place in the liberal education. The concentration on teaching students to recognise and avoid
party-spirit, anarchy and enthusiasm might be particularly suitable in 1810-11, the height of
the Napoleonic Wars, and just a few years after a major invasion scare.

In addition, the singling out of Thucydides, an author little read until the late eighteenth
century, is a statement of progress and academic superiority. His growth in popularity was
clearly connected to the increased prevalence and status of Greek in English schools and
universities. As discussed in chapter 7 below, very few Scottish undergraduates would have
had the ability to read Thucydides in the original Greek.

H.H.Drummond, in his own reply to the \textit{Edinburgh Review}, and Edward Tatham in his various
pamphlets, would have had reform go much further; both saw history as part of what would
sweep away the remnants of Aristotelian philosophy. Drummond's particular historical interest
(though the majority of his pamphlet deals with philosophy) was in Roman Antiquities as a
study suitable for prospective lawyers taking the BCL, or the BA in preparation to go to the
Inns of Court.\textsuperscript{98} The direct relevance is less than in more civil-law-based jurisdictions such as
the Netherlands and Scotland, but one might suppose that antiquarian habits of mind –
precision, attention to detail and careful research - would be thought useful in a common
lawyer.

Tatham's principal interest was the expansion of the curriculum beyond Classics into modern
studies of all kinds. He refers to ancient history as 'the most useful part' of classics in an
analogy from the study of ancient history to explain his position on philosophy; we might
learn many general principles from the study of Alexander the Great, but that would not cause
us to organise our armies in phalanges. As he acknowledges Classics would have a place,
though not pride of place, in his preferred system, we may presume ancient history would have remained.\textsuperscript{99} He distinguishes those fields in which improvement has been made since ancient times from those where it has not; literature and rhetoric belong in the latter, but philosophy of all kinds does not.\textsuperscript{100}

The focus on modernising the curriculum might be attributed to several causes. One obvious one is the increasing commercial awareness of British society. Knox devotes several chapters to the education of men destined to be wealthy merchants.\textsuperscript{101} If such men were to be made gentlemen, said Knox, men of 'enlarged and liberal ideas', they would need an education which fostered those ideas \textit{as well as} professional skills.\textsuperscript{102} The professional skills were essential; a purely cloistered education would be useless in commercial life and so whatever good it might do, merchants would not send their sons to receive one. Many of the professional skills of the merchant might be considered subjects of university study, and were so elsewhere; mathematics, geography, ethics, languages and, increasingly, political economy – all among the subjects pressed on Oxford and Cambridge by reformists within and without. History could serve as a focal point for several of these by offering a route into political economy, ethics and geography among others, as it theoretically did in the Scottish universities.

Probably the most important driver for a new kind of reform, however, was the presence of examples of how to do better. Knox and the \textit{Edinburgh Review} were very explicit in holding Oxford and Cambridge up for comparison to Edinburgh; Jebb had been only slightly less so in prefacing his treatise on reform at Cambridge with extracts from the Dublin newspapers. Edinburgh, Trinity and the Dissenting Academies lacked the amenities Oxford and Cambridge took for granted; they were poor, crowded and lacked social cachet, but seemed to be producing more evidence of scholarship and good teaching than their older half-sisters. This is not the place for an in-depth analysis of what made the Scottish and Irish universities different, but the fact of their difference was unarguably influential.

What, then, of the impetus for history specifically in these reform programmes? The growing

\textsuperscript{99} E. Tatham, \textit{A Letter to the Dean of Christ Church Respecting the New Statute upon Public Examinations, with a Third Address to the Members of Convocation at Large} (Oxford 1807) p.17
\textsuperscript{100} E. Tatham, \textit{An Address to the Members of Convocation at Large upon the Proposed Statute of Examination} (Oxford 1807) pp.5-7
\textsuperscript{101} Knox, \textit{Liberal Education} pp.154-66, 278-95 and 455.
\textsuperscript{102} Knox, \textit{Liberal Education} p.4
The curriculum reform movements show similar concerns regarding the teaching of history to the developments which actually occurred. The place of history as part of a liberal curriculum would have been made more explicit by a Prideaux, Jebb or Tatham, but not fundamentally different to how it was taught in practice by Bennett, examined in the Christ Church collections or lectured by Scott and Symonds. Reform schemes, of course, go further than what was actually achieved in practice; but the developments which did succeed show that the concern for the more effective and useful teaching of history was very much in touch with mainstream concerns about the merits and utility of the Anglican universities. Ancient history was consistently held up as one of the studies which could make Oxford and Cambridge better adapted to the delivery of 'a liberal education' to a student body of young gentlemen destined for roles in the public life of the nation. Similar concerns may be seen on a smaller scale in the third Anglican university – Trinity College Dublin – but addressed in very different ways due to that college's unique structure and needs.

4.5 Trinity College Dublin

Trinity's formal provision for teaching history, ancient or modern, begins with the establishment in 1723, one year before the Regius Chairs at Oxford and Cambridge, of a Professorship of Oratory and History along with one of Natural Philosophy. These were to be held by the winners of a public examination among the Fellows, whose number was increased by three by the same bequest. Unlike the contemporary Oxford and Cambridge chairs, this
was not a Regius Professorship funded by the Crown, but the result of a private trust originally intended to provide for teaching of Hebrew and gradually expanded as its revenues increased over the prosperous eighteenth century. It is, therefore, unique in that it was always held for a limited period; a Junior Fellowship at Trinity was a job, not a sinecure, and a young man's job at that. The Professor of Oratory and History remained a Fellow with the substantial teaching load of that post, and a little Oratory and History added to his other duties.  

Serious examinations were introduced at Dublin around this time; by the 1730s, each term was followed by an exam, and from that time onwards 'premiums' (cash prizes) were awarded for the best answerer in each 'division' – a revival of a system of examination laid down in Trinity's Laudian statutes of the 1630s. These were arbitrary groups into which each year-group was divided for administrative purposes, at this time usually three, later four or five. The curriculum was divided in two parts, science and arts. We have the full curricula for 1736, 1759 and 1793, which gives some sense of the development of the arts curriculum over the century. The set books for the arts side in 1736 included eight historians: all of Tacitus, Livy, Sallust, Caesar and Suetonius, Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, plus parts of Justin and Velleius Paterculus. Also included are Virgil, Horace, Juvenal, Terence, a little Cicero and Pliny, Homer, some Sophocles, Lucian, Demosthenes, Longinus and Theocritus.

Greek history is completely absent save for the portions of Justin, but advanced attainment in Greek was under the Laudian statutes part of the MA, not the BA; thus Greek beyond the basics tended to be studied by those remaining in residence for the higher degree. This was remedied to some extent in 1759 by the replacement of Suetonius with twelve of Plutarch's *Lives* and the addition of more Greek rhetoric at the expense of some Homer, which was by then explicitly assumed to have been read in school along with the Aeneid. This represents an extremely rapid shift in the status of Greek; from being considered (as it remained in Scotland) a purely 'university' language to an assumption, albeit perhaps more in hope than expectation, that all schoolboys would be competent Graecists. Later curricula show, as do those at Christ Church Oxford in the next chapter, a gradual increase in the variety and

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103 MacDowell & Webb, *Trinity College Dublin* p.42
104 TCD MS 1770 f.39 (part of John Hely-Hutchison's history of TCD) has the regulation that students for the BA be examined at least annually being revived in 1696, having lapsed for at least the past decade.
105 MacDowell & Webb, *Trinity College Dublin* p.39
106 TCD MUN/V/27/1 front inside cover and 90v
107 TCD MUN/V/27/2 front inside cover and MUN/V/27/3 (loose sheet, unmarked) for letter setting out 'to the Teachers of Latin and Greek of Ireland' the books matriculands were expected to have read.
difficulty of Greek authors studied over the second half of the eighteenth century, though there is on the whole still a lower proportion of Greek authors at Dublin.

The 1736 curriculum is substantially that which Edmund Burke studied a decade later, and the weighting of the arts side towards Roman history is reflected in the great orator's tendency to lard his speeches with historical allusions and Latin tags. Unlike the examples we see at Oxford colleges, the Roman Empire is fully represented by Velleius Paterculus and Suetonius as well as Tacitus. It is not a particularly daring selection of authors, but a fairly complete set of the canonical Latin historians, and may be assumed to offer a firmer (compulsory) grounding in Roman history than any other British university of the period.

Further revision of the curriculum had occurred by 1793; many authors previously read in full were assigned only in parts. Livy for example was reduced to just the Second Punic War, but Herodotus and Thucydides were added along with small amounts of Plato and Plautus, and extracts from Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*. It can be argued that the gradual addition of more rhetoric and the preservation of so much history reflects Provost John Hely-Hutchison's attempts to 'gentrify' the College – he remarked in 1785 that the balance between Science and Arts had swung too much towards the former. By the 1800s, there were the termly exams previously referenced and also a final examination for the BA sufficiently rigorous that prizes were awarded for that also. As was the case at Oxford until the late 1820s, all examinations were oral except for one Latin essay in each session.

Hely-Hutchison is closely associated in the history of TCD with social climbing; it was in his time that the College emphasised gentlemanly accomplishments such as foreign languages, riding and oratory. Over his long tenure the proportion of Trinity students destined for Holy Orders continued to decline, falling under a half (comparable to Cambridge) by his death in 1794.

The Chair of Oratory and History, however, seems to have existed in a state largely disconnected from the undergraduate curriculum, which eventually evolved into a focus on modern history whilst the arts examinations remained classical in nature. There is no record of Patrick Delaney, the first incumbent, actually lecturing on either of his topics; although

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108 TCD MS 1774 f.72
109 MacDowell & Webb, *Trinity College Dublin* p.138
MacDowell and Webb opine that 'if Delaney did, in fact, lecture on Oratory we may be sure that the lectures were lively and interesting.' Wealthy, well-connected, and charming, he published three volumes on the reign and chronology of King David, assorted sermons and works of apologetic, and a collection of essays. He also briefly edited a newspaper. In his time, one of the subjects in which Provosts of TCD occasionally lectured was Secular Chronology; Hely-Hutchison, who during his provostship wrote a manuscript history of the college, mentions two of his predecessors who did so, though Principal Andrewes was prevented from repeating the course of 1747 by the pressure of business and his excessive drinking. Delaney's successors were less notable; because the Professorship was to be given to a Junior Fellow and those tended to have a rapid turnover, the odds of a good historian being available, being elected and then remaining in post for any length of time were slim. Of the remaining Professors of Oratory and History, only the last two, John Lawson and Thomas Leland, produced anything of relevance. Lawson published a set of lectures on the theory and history of oratory, which were among the first in English to rank the Greeks above the Romans for practical public speaking and showed a scholar's knowledge of his subject as well as of the legal and political systems of the late Roman Republic. Delaney was still alive, though long moved on from his post, when the Professorship was split into two, Oratory and History, in 1762.

It is bizarre to note that when the Chair was split in two Trinity actually had, for the first time in its history, a noted historian in the post; indeed, arguably the most notable historian to hold any such professorship in the eighteenth century. Thomas Leland, son of the Nonconformist theologian John Leland, had already edited Demosthenes' *Philippics* with an extensive historical commentary, and written a life of Philip of Macedon which was well-received and regularly reprinted well into the nineteenth century. Leland was appointed to the Chair of Oratory and History in 1761, immediately before it was divided, and promptly published one of the first historical novels, *Longsword, Earl of Salisbury*, in the Gothick style then coming into fashion. After all that, he rather surprisingly retained the Chair of Oratory; History was retitled Modern History and given to the undistinguished William Andrews. Leland continued to write on both history and rhetoric; his principal work was a three-volume *History of Ireland*, which was attacked from both pro- and anti-Catholic standpoints but is remembered

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110 Ibid. p.45
111 See TCD MS 1774 f.47, part of John Hely-Hutchison's unpublished history of TCD
112 J.Lawson, *Lectures concerning Oratory delivered in Trinity College Dublin* (Dublin 1758)
113 T.Leland, *History of the Life and Reign of Philip King of Macedon* (2vols, Dublin 1758)
now for its distinctively Irish rather than English outlook.¹¹⁴

Andrews' successor Michael Kearney seemed to forget the addition of 'Modern' to his title and lectured, apparently successfully, on the Roman Constitution, an interesting attempt to link the classical curriculum with the extra-curricular professorial lectures, though not quite what they were intended to accomplish.¹¹⁵ He gave just four formal lectures a year, which the preface to his published lectures of 1775 claims is the limit of his obligation as History Professor. However, they were substantial lectures, and he would also have had a considerable teaching load; Trinity had at the time more undergraduate students and fewer staff than Glasgow, Christ Church or the two Aberdeen colleges combined.

The lectures are based, so the Preface avers, on the anacyclosis of Polybius, the cycle of constitutions between monarchy, aristocracy and democracy, and the mixed constitution which can break the cycle, but in fact owe more to Montesquieu, who is quoted frequently and extensively. Kearney covers the development of the Roman constitution from the foundation of the city to the time of Augustus, but rarely mentions the 'mixed constitution' which is his predecessors' ideal; rather, he notes that all constitutions are, necessarily, mixed in practice, and focuses on the dominant force, which he characterises in the case of Rome as an aristocracy of birth shading, via an ill-defined semi-democratic period, to an unstable pseudo-aristocracy based on wealth and the military glory by which wealth is acquired.¹¹⁶ The principal ancient authors referred to in the text are Livy and, to a much lesser degree, Dio Cassius and Polybius, along with Machiavelli, Montesquieu, Harrington, Bolingbroke and several other moderns.

It is tempting, but probably not wise, to think that this list might reflect some of the reading done in Kearney's classes, but only Livy from that list appears on the Arts curriculum of 1759, along with Sallust, Tacitus, Caesar and quite a lot of Plutarch.¹¹⁷ After 57 close-set octavo pages of Roman history, Kearney finally comes in the last pages to 'modern history, the most immediate object of these lectures'. The fourth lecture finishes with a discussion of the dangers of a moral relativism which says all ages are equally vicious, and of a despair which

¹¹⁵ M.Kearney, Lectures concerning History read during the year 1775 in Trinity College Dublin (London 1776)
¹¹⁶ Ibid. summed up neatly p.53
¹¹⁷ TCD MUN V/27/2, inside front cover
says today is infinitely the worst. Kearney states that just as there is a cycle of constitutions, so there is one of manners, with each age having its own peculiar vices, but it is possible for an individual or society to find a least-bad path, a golden mean between barbarism and decadence. In manners, as in literature, he concludes, this is achieved by 'a judicious imitation of classical originals' – a bold claim for the moral value of classics and particularly of history – to teach the student how and where to find that golden mean.\textsuperscript{118}

There are a couple of references in the TCD muniments to separate lecturers in Ancient and Modern History – one refers to the 'professor of Oratory and Ancient History', suggesting that these remained combined, at least briefly, when Modern History was hived off. Separate lectures were given in each in c.1780 (at the start of each term) and the 'lecturer in Ancient History' and 'Professor in Modern History' both received increases of stipend in 1782, but certainly there was not an endowed Chair in Ancient History.\textsuperscript{119} Given that we know an assistant professor of history existed by 1791, ancient history may have been part of the assistant's duties.

Henry Dabzac (1778-90) also lectured regularly, but on the constitutional history of England, and his lectures do not survive; thereafter the lectures seem to have fallen into disuse for some time. However, George Miller (often rendered Millar) served as assistant Professor from 1799-1811, before succeeding to the Professorship, and gave, in place of his absentee superior, \textit{Lectures on the Philosophy of Modern History} which were later published in eight substantial volumes.\textsuperscript{120} These attempt to trace the unifying themes of the modern world, taken to begin at the fall of the Western Roman Empire and to end with the outbreak of the French Revolutionary War. It is unclear how these were delivered; the preface to volume one refers to their 'delivery over eleven years' which might be taken to imply eight lectures a year for over a decade (cf. Kearney's statutory four a year), or more conventionally that he taught the same course, with modifications, eleven years running. Each lecture, of 13,000 words, would have taken about an hour and a half to deliver, and might have been spread over the Dublin academic year at a rate of roughly four a week.

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\textsuperscript{118} Ibid. pp.63-5
\textsuperscript{119} TCD MS 1774 f.110 (lectures in Ancient and Modern History) and ff.261-2 (augmentations of salaries). f.270 has the first mention of an assistant to the professor of modern history, authorised to be recruited in c.1786.
\textsuperscript{120} G.Miller, \textit{Lectures on the Philosophy of Modern History} (8vols, Dublin 1811-28)
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little consideration of the ancient world, but of all the university history teachers of the period he is one of the most clear and eloquent about his purpose in lecturing, and was held up as an example elsewhere, so deserves a little further consideration. He sets out in his introductory lecture that his purpose is to give 'the philosophy of history' as opposed to merely 'a philosophical history' in the manner of Ferguson or Gibbon. He claims to cover as much as possible of world history, although in practice the course was dominated by England, France and the Mediterranean, in order to 'comprehend the whole, and present it as a single, though complex object, to the reflecting mind. The historian, however philosophical, must direct his attention chiefly to parts; the philosopher of history speculates solely on their combination.'

This combination was to show the 'moral order' of the world, and was strongly Providential in character. Miller argues, especially in the second and final lectures, that the general course of human history shows God's benevolent hand. The general, impersonal forces driving history, such as human nature, geography, technological innovations and their spread, set history on its course, and if fallible and wicked humans drove it off the path of 'a general prevalence of good and a general progress of improvement', individual, transformative characters could represent a more direct divine intervention. Examples of providence at work through individual inspiration include Joan of Arc and Henry VIII.

Miller's first lecture (of a total of 84) examines the history of political philosophy, dividing all such works into the essentially Platonist, concerned with abstracts and speculation, and the Aristotelian, dealing in evidence and experience. He also gives a historical survey of the reasons why there was no original political philosophy in Rome; the field thrives on comparison, and Rome knew no comparators for longer than it took to destroy them. The lecture sets out the views and in Miller's eyes limitations of the major figures of the eighteenth century, with particular praise for Montesquieu (whose emphasis on climate, however, is considered excessive) and Adam Smith.

Being a modern history course, Miller justifies his beginning point by arguing that Late Antiquity represents a total loss of the distinctive features of the classical world – Rome had lost, by the long peace, lasting tyranny, and civil war, all trace of its classical society in favour of 'the worst barbarism, that of degenerate civilisation'; the 'principles of social improvement'

121 Ibid. i (xii)
122 Ibid. i 75-130 and viii 402-427
123 Ibid. i 11-33
could only endure with a large infusion of fresh blood (and barely did so).\textsuperscript{124} There is little further discussion of the ancient world, but again Tacitus' \textit{Germania} is a foundational text for the modern (medieval) society. Despite this reliance on Tacitus, Miller is sceptical; although 'the treatise of Tacitus has rendered every student familiar with the character of those tribes of ancient Germany, which acted a part so important in the formation of the modern system', Tacitus tended to see the grass as greener on the other side of the \textit{limes}, in much the same way as a confirmed city dweller idealises the country life.\textsuperscript{125}

Miller is referred to in the report of the Commission of Visitation for the Scottish Universities as giving more tightly-focused occasional lectures or courses of lectures on particular periods and topics, rather than 'universal History', and is held up in that report as a potential model for the Professor of Civil History at St Andrews (see below, ch.6) who, having failed to attract much interest with a course of general history, had given up lecturing at all by the 1820s.\textsuperscript{126} This suggests that Miller's full 84 lectures were spread over eleven years, and that in any given year he gave a particular subset and explained how these demonstrated his general philosophy. Otherwise, a course covering over 1000 years could hardly be referred to as 'specific' even by the extremely broad-brush standards of a Scottish chair of Civil History.

\textbf{4.6 Summary}

University Chairs in History were a new eighteenth-century development in Britain, inspired by a mixture of foreign example, longstanding internal notions and external pressure. The Government and major political patrons wanted big items of patronage in their hands, which tended to have a centralising effect. The professorial system in 1700 was not in use at any British university, though it had been tried at Glasgow and Marischal, with Edinburgh shortly to become the first university to introduce it in the eighteenth century. The existing extra-curricular chairs in England and Ireland had barely even got going. However, by 1800 even England's professors were a respectable class, if still seriously marginalised by the strength of the colleges, the tutorial system, and the classical/mathematical curriculum.

\textsuperscript{124} Ibid. i 193-4
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid. i 206
\textsuperscript{126} Evidence, oral and documentary, taken and received by the Commissioners appointed by His Majesty George IV, July 23d, 1826; and re-appointed by His Majesty William IV, October 12th, 1830, for Visiting the Universities of Scotland (4vols, London 1837) iii 30

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These professorships had begun to establish not just their formal existence, but a place in the
closer university, as may be seen for example in the uneasy compromise between Symonds
and Smyth at Cambridge and the rigours of the examination system. It was necessarily a
minor place and in a sense this chapter is about the ways in which history, especially ancient
history, was started and laid aside many times at the university level; there was never a
consistency in its provision either within or across universities. However, there was clearly a
consistent interest among reform-minded intellectuals in improving that provision – it was
never simply given up on after around 1770.

'Modern history' was something of a misnomer for what its Professors actually taught in the
Anglican universities; the Scottish and Continental designation 'Universal History' might have
been more appropriate, as until Smyth and Miller in the 1800s there is no real evidence of a
Modern History professor who excluded the ancient world from his area of responsibility
entirely. There is not much distinction of periods visible, a situation which continued until the
establishment of regular Modern History degrees another half-century on, with the exception
of Smyth's French Revolution course, which began around 1820, and Miller's lectures at
Dublin, which started to encompass the same sort of specialised, in-depth teaching a little
earlier. Only at the very end of the period do we begin to find such consistency, and it is seen
in the entire separation of history, now in the form of modern history, from the still classical,
mathematical and philosophical examination curriculum.

Ancient history had always been a prominent part of the classical course at Trinity College
Dublin, and remained so. At Oxford and Cambridge too, it formed part of the college
curriculum and it is to that way of teaching that we now turn our attention. Attempts to
centralise the provision of history at Oxford and Cambridge failed not merely because the
prevailing culture regarded the universities' professorships as sinecures, but because it stood
in direct competition with college teaching which, whilst deeply uneven and often equally
non-existent, was fiercely defended by its partisans and produced many examples of effective
teaching alongside its better-known failures.

The comparison of the English professors' work with the 'universal history' courses of Miller
at Trinity College Dublin, and of Alexander Tytler and William Knight at Edinburgh and
Aberdeen, which are discussed in Chapter 6 below, and which took place at the same time, is
instructive. The Scottish lecturers are much more concerned to cover the basics of what
happened; they are providing an overview to (hopefully) large classes of students of very limited prior attainments. The goal, in institutional terms, is to provide the raw material of examples and instances for moral philosophy and political economy, which are the real business of the university. Miller, by contrast, saw history as an expression of those subjects, which could only be truly known by historical study, and as a source of evidence for the truth of revelation.

Smyth, however, was neither a universal historian nor a proclaimer of a philosophy of history. Rather, he accepted the strictures of Johnson and Gray (and many others) on the merits of lecturing. However, a guide to reading was still invaluable to the busy, time-limited undergraduate. Whereas George Campbell argued against giving students too many titles lest they be demoralised by too much potential work, Smyth offered students as much as they could want or need. Smyth and Miller joined Tytler of Edinburgh (discussed in ch.6) in the select band of teachers of history whose lectures were published to popular acclaim as well as attracting appreciable student audiences. Despite the many arguments made for why history was important to teach as well as read, not least its potentially stabilising (or destabilising) functions, a book could reach a far wider audience than even a very successful lecture course. However, Smyth could do what the undergraduates alone, however conscientious in their reading, could not do – point out the texts which were 'safe', and the dangers of those which were not. In the climate of fear-of-revolution in which the lectures were originally composed, this could be a valuable function of the University, to set itself against destabilising views of the past.

History, which as we have seen in Chapter 1 from Womersley's argument could easily be viewed as an intrinsically dangerous study without the closest of supervision and control, was perhaps particularly in need of this sort of evidence of political reliability to flourish, which it did under Smyth and Miller as never before at the prestigious and highly visible university level. Wainwright, writing in 1815 in defence of Cambridge's curriculum, described Smyth's lectures as 'replete with curious observations on the manners and customs of different countries, their various forms of government, and the maxims of policy which have prevailed in each, and they dwell with peculiar interest on all those grand topics connected with the welfare of nations and the principles of legislation, which render history and political

127 See discussion of George Campbell, Professor of Divinity at Aberdeen, in ch.8 below.
The education of a statesman was, perhaps, less of a consideration elsewhere, but the education of a rounded citizen was just as high in Miller's priorities. This may be reflected in the balance of their lectures; Miller focused more on ethics, faith and moral example; Smyth on the intricacies of European politics. Both represent a new success for a history chair; their courses endured as the fitful starts of the early Oxford Regius Historians and the occasional Trinity professor who could snatch time away from his tutorial commitments had not.

128 C.Wainwright, *Short Account of the Literary and Scientific Pursuits followed at the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge 1815) p.34
At both Oxford and Cambridge, most formal tuition was carried on within the college by a student's own tutor or tutors; university-wide lectures were an optional extra, despite obsolete statutes requiring attendance at some or all of them.\textsuperscript{129} The situation at Trinity Dublin is slightly different in that it was effectively a collegiate university with only one College; as we have seen, the tutors were teaching exactly what the examinations would cover, and were provided from an early date with a set curriculum which the vast majority of students followed.\textsuperscript{130} This effectively mirrors the 'regent' system in use overseas and in Aberdeen, which declined over the long eighteenth century to leave English universities looking increasingly singular. The main differences between English tutoring and Scottish regenting are as follows: first and foremost, in England there was no effective set curriculum for tutors to follow, so tutors did not necessarily lead their charges through a fixed succession of topics, and tutorial lectures could vary greatly. Second; tutors had a responsibility for overseeing their students' financial and moral well-being that would have been impossible in the much looser community of a Scottish university.\textsuperscript{131} Although at Aberdeen and St Andrews attempts to control students' worship and finances persisted well into the nineteenth century, they would have been considered, in theory, scandalously lax by an English college.\textsuperscript{132} There was thus a much less narrowly academic role for an English tutor than a Scottish regent, but the former had considerably more freedom to teach what he and his students liked; in no few cases, this turned out to be ancient history, and in some cases college authorities supported the teaching of history as well.

For most colleges at Oxford and Cambridge across the period we do not know what undergraduates read; for a pass-man, someone not aiming to sit the new honours examination but to take a plain BA, or \textit{a fortiori} a wealthy gentleman-commoner desiring an honorary MA, it was perfectly possible even at the end of the period for the answer to be 'nothing at all'. Various polemics against the universities, or old men's reminiscences, might have exaggerated the situation, but it is harder to discount the testimony of the uncommonly dedicated John James Jr that one of his classmates 'protested with vehemence that he had not looked in any

\textsuperscript{129} See J.Yolton, 'Schoolmen, logic and philosophy' in Sutherland & Mitchell (eds) \textit{History of the University of Oxford V} pp.565-93.
\textsuperscript{130} MacDowell & Webb, \textit{Trinity College Dublin} p.46
\textsuperscript{131} Brooke, \textit{History of Cambridge} iii 120-9.
\textsuperscript{132} There is a brief discussion of attempts to enforce chapel-going on students in R.G.Cant, \textit{Short History of St Andrews University} (2\textsuperscript{nd} ed. St Andrews 1970) p.104
Latin or Greek book since his matriculation, and as for the sciences he was hardly acquainted
with their names.\footnote{John James to his father in \textit{Letters of Radcliffe and James} p.160} This paragon of idleness nonetheless acquired his BA; a large minority of
students took no degree at all; Lawrence Stone calculates that between 50-60\% of matriculants
eventually took their BA in the long eighteenth century, a figure which fluctuated but had
begun to rise steadily by the 1780s, to a high of 75\% in the 1840s where it remained until after
the First World War.\footnote{L.Stone, 'Size and Composition of the Oxford Student Body, 1580-1910' in \textit{The University and Society} (2vols, Princeton, 1974) i 24}

If discerning what students read is difficult, discerning \textit{how} and \textit{why} they read it is nigh
impossible. In the case of ancient history in particular, it is easy to suppose that histories were
read as exemplars of classical language and literature. Doubtless this was sometimes the case,
but the selection of authors demonstrates it cannot tell the whole story. The literary style of
Tacitus was considered of debatable merit; for every Gibbon who adored him, a Lord Kames
detested his work.\footnote{H.Home (Lord Kames), \textit{Elements of Criticism} (2vols, Edinburgh 1762) ii 377} Florus' literary significance was purely negligible.\footnote{See discussion above, p.8} Caesar and Livy
would have been read as literature fashion at school (see above, ch.2), and ought to have been
considered rather easy for an ambitious student, though their readers could be found among
the most studious, such as Walter Stanhope (see below pp.111-13). As well as reading for
narrative history, these historical works may have been used to give antiquarian context for
other classical reading.

The widespread use of Xenophon's \textit{Cyropaedia} is an example of a work that might be
considered nominally a 'history', but is so far removed from any historical context that it is far
more likely to have been used as a purely literary text for its relatively straightforward Greek
prose. At Christ Church, where detailed records of books read and examined upon survive,
there is a great increase in the range and linguistic difficulty of Greek authors studied after
1770. This includes but is not limited to an increase in historians and reflects, among other
things, changing literary tastes, a greater admiration for the 'pure' or 'attic' Greek of the fifth
century BC, and increased knowledge of the Greek language to fully appreciate the tricky
style of the period. Conversely, authors of no stylistic distinction, such as Diodorus Siculus
and Dio Cassius, are also more widely mentioned, so the increase in Greek language skill was
not merely used to read more fashionable and stylish authors, but to widen the range of

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\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{133} John James to his father in \textit{Letters of Radcliffe and James} p.160
\item \textsuperscript{134} L.Stone, 'Size and Composition of the Oxford Student Body, 1580-1910' in \textit{The University and Society} (2vols, Princeton, 1974) i 24
\item \textsuperscript{135} H.Home (Lord Kames), \textit{Elements of Criticism} (2vols, Edinburgh 1762) ii 377
\item \textsuperscript{136} See discussion above, p.8
\end{itemize}
historical sources as well.

Texts other than histories could be read in an historical or antiquarian spirit also, as we may see from Cyril Jackson's habit of examining students on Virgil's Georgics in largely or even primarily antiquarian terms. It is, however, important to note that in 1808 this apparently came as a surprise to some students, so Jackson's practice was clearly not universal.\(^{137}\) It is tempting to conclude that the one surviving set of Oxford or Cambridge college lectures on a work of history of which I am aware, those of Bennet at Emmanuel in the 1770s, is more typical of the way in which ancient history was taught, but there is insufficient evidence to do so with confidence – the argument that Bennet was at any rate not considered extraordinarily good is discussed later.\(^{138}\) These, discussed at length below, are primarily concerned with Tacitus' *Germania*, an ethnographic and historical treatise on the peoples of Central Europe, as a source for the origins of the Anglo-Saxon people and their socio-political institutions.

In general terms, the available evidence for undergraduates' study of ancient history is limited in volume and variable in form; as is evidence for what students read or studied more generally. Colleges did not generally keep samples of academic work, and it is doubtless true that in many colleges students were often idle and their tutors inactive. Examination papers, where examinations were held, are quite likely to survive and exam papers or related materials such as examiners' reports or records of exam topics survive in large numbers at several colleges and odd examples at many more. Student themes or declamations, essays or presentation scripts, are rarer but also highly instructive, no less so because at least at some colleges they were less structured than college lectures, offering the individual student more of a chance to express himself. Finally, student correspondence has been extensively studied, especially by the authors of the *History of the University of Oxford* and older examples of the same genre, and has occasionally shed light on students' historical reading. I have largely confined myself to colleges where a substantial body of material of whatever kind exists, but in general more work is definitely possible on college archives as sources for the academic life of the Universities in this period, albeit highly complicated by imperfect cataloguing and the great volume of material.

However, there is some evidence of colleges enforcing student work, and supplying some of

\(^{137}\) George Chinnery, *Correspondence*, ChCh MS XLVIII a.42 f.144v

\(^{138}\) See below p.118
the academic rigour, or at least activity, which the lack of a proper examination system
discouraged. The survival of evidence is extremely patchy and seldom withstands direct
comparison; in particular, there is very little by way of undergraduate work or records for the
years from the 1680s to about 1750. What does survive gives only snapshots of the situation
of undergraduate work at various colleges and times, and it is important not to generalise too
broadly from a few famous cases across colleges, universities and periods, as will become
particularly evident from the case of Magdalen College, Oxford, perhaps the college with
whose reputation most readers will be familiar thanks to its condemnation by Gibbon. In
addition to Gibbon's memoirs, we have the list of books each undergraduate was expected to
read in every term of his residence in the 1790s, as well as many examples of student work.
For Christ Church, drawn on for numerous previous studies, three volumes of Collections
Books list in detail the works students were examined on in the 'collections', termly, usually
oral exams set internally by (some) colleges. At various other colleges, individuals'
correspondence or chance survivals of student work can give some indication of
undergraduates' regular college work.

Most college tutors held regular 'lectures' in appropriate parts of academic learning, generally
mathematics, philosophy or classical literature. The latter are particularly applicable to
Oxford, where there was never a focus on mathematics as there was at Cambridge, but
Cambridge colleges had tutorial lectures on Classics as well as Mathematics. It is important to
recall that neither Oxford nor Cambridge had any formal or consistent Classics examination
until the Oxford New Examination Statute of 1801; so throughout the eighteenth century there
was little greater incentive to classical study at Oxford than at Cambridge, except perhaps
greater spare time for students, and the off-chance of having one's examiners in classics take
the affair unusually seriously. However, the majority of surviving evidence of ancient history
and related subjects being taught and read at a college level is at Oxford.

Two of the best sources for college teaching in History are from students of University
College, Oxford, about 50 years apart. In 1721, Nicholas Toke came to that college, then a
centre of antiquarian learning among the Fellows, as a Gentleman Commoner, and his
correspondence with his uncle and mentor about his studies is almost the only evidence of that

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139 Christ Church Archives, Collections Books I-III
140 See for example discussion of college lectures in L.S.Sutherland, 'The Curriculum' in Sutherland and
L.G.Mitchell (eds), History of the University of Oxford V pp.469-492
antiquarian bent having any effect on the student body.\textsuperscript{141} Apparently on his uncle's advice, Toke began his studies with history, and only later turned to logic out of a slightly quixotic desire to acquire a BA, which was most unusual for a Gentleman Commoner and brought him considerable social opprobrium.\textsuperscript{142} In his first days at the college Toke read and compared various modern introductory textbooks of ecclesiastical and civil history under the direction of his tutor, Thomas Cockerill; specifically, Eachard (unclear whether his \textit{Roman History}, \textit{History of England} or \textit{Ecclesiastical History}, but in any case Toke concurred with his tutor that Eachard was 'a partial Historian'), Stillingfleet's \textit{Origines Sacrae} and 'Sir Walter Rawleigh'.\textsuperscript{143} He later moved on to concentrate on the study of chronology, compiling concordances between the tables of Du Pin, Helvicus and Capellus, whilst also reading the principal source-texts for the ecclesiastical side of those works, namely the Old Testament and Josephus' \textit{Jewish Antiquities}. He also began to study Geography 'the knowledge of which is essential to an Historian' and purchased expensive books of maps to aid his work.\textsuperscript{144} His subsequent letters reiterate the importance of geography 'a necessary companion to History as is History to the Law' in which he intended to make his career, though he proclaimed his intention to study 'omnia mediocriter', all things in moderation, and to be a public figure rather than a 'mere scholar'. Indeed, Toke went on to study mathematics and ethics before returning to his love of history in his final year at Oxford, 1725, when he wrote to his uncle that he had,

...begun to read Civil & Feudal Law, the latter of which naturally led me to enquire, more diligently than I had before, into the ancient Constitution of this Island, the form of Government introduced here by the Saxons ... What were also the Laws & Customs that then prevail’d, what was the Prerogative of King & Subject, what were the Courts of Judicature, & the Persons, that were constituent parts of the Legislature, seem to be enquirys necessary for a Student of the Laws of England to make. .... I find ... other things debated with equal warmth ... particularly upon what our Saxon Kings grounded their Claims to the Crown, whether upon Election, the will of their Predecessor, or hereditary right.\textsuperscript{145}

In other words, Toke read legal and constitutional history, which seems to have become his real passion; his letters from his last year are by far his longest and most enthusiastic. Whereas previously history had been mid-way up his hierarchy of subjects, superior to geography but inferior to the law, it is now invested with intrinsic interest beyond those parts relevant to legal

\textsuperscript{141} Letters of Nicholas Toke in Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. Th. c.27-c.29
\textsuperscript{142} Toke letters c. 27 pp. 337–8.
\textsuperscript{143} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{144} Ibid., also c.27 p.366
\textsuperscript{145} Toke letters c. 29 pp. 23–4.
studies. Toke did indeed go on to the Bar and clearly considered his personal, even antiquarian interest would make him more fit to discuss great constitutional issues if and when his career advanced that far. In fact, he practised irregularly, as many barristers did, from 1729 until he inherited the family seat in 1746.

For a slightly later period, a catalogue of books purchased by Charles Yarburgh of University College also survives. It is dominated by drama and poetry, but includes several of the historians mentioned by Nicholas Toke and the Christ Church Collections Books, especially Du Pin whose history appears twice, as do the works of Tacitus. Among some 66 works purchased, other historical works include Velleius Paterculus, Quintus Curtius, Sallust, Suetonius, Caesar, Xenophon, Cicero's and Pliny's letters, Herodotus and a handful of works on modern history including Reading's History of London and Watts' Ecclesiastical History. Most of these were purchased in Yarburgh's first year, 1735/6, suggesting they were part of a programme of reading rather than a general interest throughout his four years in Oxford. Moreover, it was clearly an initial programme, providing background and context for later and more varied studies.

Walter Stanhope, a later but equally keen and conscientious student, wrote home in 1767 from University College about 'a long tedious lecture in Metaphysics' three times a week 'besides bringing written answers to the Question that occurred in the preceding Lecture', which was a public college lecture, and on Sophocles on two other days, which were private lectures given only to those who paid the College Tutor as a private tutor also.

William Scott, who has already been discussed in his later role as Camden Professor, was in the 1760s Tutor of University College, where almost all tuition was done by two Fellows. He also acted as private tutor to his brother John, who later became, as Lord Eldon, Lord Chancellor 1801-6 and 1807-27, and to various other students, including Stanhope. As Camden Professor he was a rare bird; as we have seen, one of few holders of that post to attempt to lecture on a regular basis, and admired for the quality of his work. Given that his Camden lectures seem to have been on periods or questions which interested him (based on the little we know of them) rather than 'universal history' or exposition of a particular author, it seems reasonable to suppose that some of his college teaching before his election had covered

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146 University College Archives P.124, a copy of extracts from Yarburgh's account book which is in the Borthwick Institute MS YM/AB/13; I am indebted for the summary of these records to Dr. Robin Darwall-Smith of University College, Oxford.
similar ground. However, it was not Scott but his colleague who taught Walter Stanhope history.

Stanhope, a scholarly undergraduate, attended the lectures of both College Tutors, though when he wrote the letter in question the other, Robert Chambers, was away and in place of his lectures set his students to read Rollin's *Ancient History* and to practice their French 'so as to be able to construe it with Readiness'. Stanhope says later in the same letter that he is planning to read Livy as soon as his workload abates, possibly in preparation for Chambers' return. The setting of Rollin as advance reading suggests that whatever the form of teaching was, it went beyond simply construing Livy, and would require considerable contextual knowledge. This is especially true if it is in fact the *Roman* and not the *Ancient History* – an easy mistake to make, though the latter has considerable material on the Punic Wars in the volume dealing with Carthage. University College at this time was exceptional for the vigour of its teaching and its impressive, if small, collection of Fellows; its flowering was short-lived, but produced some of Oxford's most distinguished Fellows and graduates of the period, and was even noticed by Gibbon as an exception to his general condemnation of the University. Stanhope later became an MP, as did his contemporary John Acland, and both are discussed further in Chapter 11 below in the context of their use of ancient history in parliamentary speeches – we may see the ghost of Stanhope's conscientious reading of Rollin in the MP with a classical allusion at his fingertips in debate.

Students who could afford a private tutor were encouraged to have one (or more) – Stanhope, as well as private tuition from William Scott, attended classes in French and fencing, and would have taken dancing-lessons had there been a good tutor available. Scott as a private tutor, given his historical interests, may well have read history with his students as he did in his main class, but records of academic private tuition are vanishingly rare. This trend was increasingly evident as the century went on. At Cambridge, private tutors were typically employed only for subjects outside the curriculum until the 1770s, when the growing prestige of the Tripos exam and the decline in numbers of college tutors increased students' desire to

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150 See below p.249
fully master their subjects; this was widely criticised as driving up the expense of education.\textsuperscript{151} College tutors had until the mid-century been relatively numerous, and thus had only a few students each. George Chinnery, writing as an undergraduate of Christ Church in 1808, saw private tuition reduced to a system and to all intents and purposes part of the college's standard education. If the Dean, the reform-minded and socially aware Cyril Jackson, saw both potential and a sufficient minimum of wealth in a freshman, he would be pointed in the direction of a suitable tutor, often but not always a member of the college.\textsuperscript{152}

More than a generation earlier, George Fothergill, desperately short of money throughout his undergraduate years, thought it essential to keep up paying his private tutor, which was his largest expenditure once his exhibition covered his board and lodging.\textsuperscript{153} Fothergill read almost exclusively theology, which was his passion; by definition, if they had a private tutor students could read whatever they liked or thought useful with him. Private tuition in general is the great unknown of the eighteenth-century universities; it may have been a large proportion of what undergraduates actually did, but we know very little about it; it was informal, transient, and often covered subjects not really considered part of university learning at all. Where it was academic in nature it was perhaps practiced more by those students who felt a need to work, of whom we generally hear less than we do of the rich and idle. The richer and less pressured undergraduates have always been newsworthy; their misdeeds in the eighteenth century attracted just as much opprobrium as their equivalents today. Both then and now, the frankly rather dull life of a hard-working ordinand attracted less interest – poorer students were also less likely to publish the volumes of memoirs and reminiscences which fill in so much of our patchy knowledge of college life and work in the eighteenth century.

At Dublin, the 'crams' were more clearly differentiated from the official syllabus, rather more like the 'private' classes at the Scottish universities, for which see below in Chapter 7, precisely because there was more consistent official tuition; for example, the resident modern languages tutors were raised during the presidency of Hely-Hutchison to Professorships. Those continued to give mostly private, non-examined, fee-paying classes, but most professorial classes at other universities were fee-paying whether part of the Professor's

\textsuperscript{151} Winstanley, \textit{Unreformed Cambridge} p.331
\textsuperscript{152} Correspondence of Geo. Chinnery, Christ Church Archives MSS XLVIII a.42a ff.77r, 86v \textit{et seq.}, see discussion in Bill, \textit{Education at Christ Church}, p.237.
\textsuperscript{153} C.Thornton and F.McLaughlin, \textit{The Fothergills of Ravenstonedale, their lives and letters} (London 1905) p.77

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During the long eighteenth century no fewer than three new colleges were founded at Oxford and Cambridge: Hertford, Worcester and Downing. Whilst there is no evidence of a privileged place (or any place) for ancient history in the two Oxford colleges, it should be noted that Downing was formed as a lay college of law and medicine, and might be expected to have had lectures in those parts of Roman history relevant to the former. More to the present point, all three colleges, as new and poor foundations, had a very high proportion of gentleman-commoners; one of the early selling-points of Hertford was that, unlike Toke's experience at University College, the founder, Robert Newton, expected his young gentlemen to work. In fact, he had originally intended to create a college with no distinctions of rank among the students. Charles James Fox, one of the mere couple of hundred students to attend the original Hertford College, said 'for a man who reads a great deal, there cannot be a more agreeable place'. In particular, he read mathematics, but also Cicero's correspondence, and he came to admire Cicero for his oratory, civilised manners and high principles. At Worcester and Downing there does not seem to have been the same impetus towards hard work; both became known as warehouses for aristocratic youths.

Manuscripts from Emmanuel College, Cambridge, give a different perspective on college tuition. There, a selection of the college lectures of William Bennet, Fellow from 1769 to 1790, are preserved, having been donated to the College by one of his pupils in the early nineteenth century. These all take the same form: a cheap octavo or duodecimo copy of the work to be discussed, in the original language, interleaved with hand-written notes, most clearly intended to be read aloud, some cryptic fragments clearly as aides-memoires. There are some seven books covered, including the Acts of the Apostles and Cicero's De Oratore; in the former set, Bennet attempts to explain why the Acts were written and the purpose behind their curious structure, whereas de Oratore is treated principally as a manual for the education and self-education of a gentleman, with sidelights on the principles of advocacy.
Particularly interesting as regards history, Bennet covered in a single course one or two terms long two of Tacitus' works – his life of Agricola, the Roman general and governor of Britannia, and the *Germania*, an ethnographic treatise on the peoples of Germany. Bennet was an authority on Roman Britain, he produced a treatise on Roman roads, unpublished but surviving in MS at Emmanuel, and his lectures on Tacitus clearly reflect this. The lectures on the *Agricola* begin with a brief biography of Tacitus and appreciation of his literary style, which Bennet deprecates as 'consisting of short broken Periods, obscure in themselves, & disjoined from everything around them' but nonetheless defends against Lord Kames' characterisation of Tacitus as 'the ape of Sallust', calling many of Tacitus' sentences 'beautiful in themselves'.

Overall, Bennet considers Tacitus best suited to reading in a lecture-room, where the untrained tastes of the young student will not be dazzled by his failings. The *Agricola* is among the least-annotated of Bennet's lecture-texts, and obviously one of the first sets he compiled; other lectures frequently refer to it. The existing copy is based on a one-volume edition of *Agricola* and *Germania* from 1788, but the notes on *Agricola* are clearly copied verbatim or nearly so from an earlier series. Some important passages do appear, mostly explaining historical details necessary to understand the author's point. A long digression early in the text is typical, if unusually inaccurate; Bennet does his best to impose a simple equivalency between the command structure of a Roman legion and a British regiment to help his students understand the fairly typical career path Agricola followed. It is fairly clear from the text that he is aware his explanation falls into the category of 'lies to small children', and I suspect he elaborated further if the students seemed likely to appreciate greater precision. A similar note, on the beginning of Agricola's governorship, explains both the term and post 'procurator' with reference to the New Testament and contemporary Venetian (though, curiously, not Scottish which one might expect to be more familiar than Venice) usage.

Much longer, and rather more interesting, are the lectures on the *Germania*. Bennet is firmly convinced that this depicts the ancestors of the Anglo-Saxons and that early English political institutions (and thence the contemporary constitution) can be traced to those Tacitus

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160 Emmanuel College MS 168 Lectures on Tacitus, title page of *Agricola*  
161 Ibid., *Agricola* Preface 5  
163 Ibid *Agricola* 4.4-6
describes; the Common Law is 'nothing but a collection of immemorial customs; we cannot understand many of them without an understanding of the Sources whence they are derived … the rudiments of all our Laws are to be found in the forests of Germany'. The particular areas he addresses cover both social and political customs. In the latter case, Bennet builds his case for commonality between ancient Germany and modern England on democracy. Although he acknowledges that Britain has never been the sort of direct tribal democracy that Tacitus presents, Bennet draws a common thread through British history; that the landowners have always been entitled to a say in the government. Whether 'landowners' referred to yeomen in the witenagemot or Barons under Henry III, property rights have therefore always been secure. Due to modern prosperity and the large size of the British state, representative government, Bennet says, is now necessary, and universally accepted whatever ongoing disputes about its exact nature may exist. Along with equality before the law, which Bennet does not explicitly trace to the Germania;

this certain possession of our Property [makes] this nation the seat of Arts, Health, Freedom & the only spot in Europe except perhaps a Canton or two in Switzerland where it is worthwhile for a man to breathe … we owe this to the great Idea here laid down by Tacitus.

Tacitus lays down nothing of the sort, the Germania barely mentions property rights among the Germans. Indeed, Gibbon around the same time as Bennet noted that the Germans were not tied to their homelands by secure property, because Germany had no landed wealth worth the name.

Whilst the identification of property rights with English liberty, still heard today, was fairly commonplace, making Property rather than, say, limited monarchy the eternal and distinctive organising principle of English politics not merely in the present day but from the beginning is a distinctively Whiggish viewpoint. We should perhaps expect this from a Fellow at Cambridge, where by this period institutional Whig politics lived in comfortable alliance with the inviolable property rights of the University and Colleges as independent corporations.

The specific connection between insecurity of property and the failure of Rome is a minor theme in Ferguson's Roman Republic, which was enjoying high acclaim in the later years of

164 Ibid. Germania Preface 2
165 Ibid. Germania 10.5 et seq.
Bennet's tenure, and is discussed in detail in Chapter 3 above. Bennet sets this Germanic tradition, which he describes as a necessary precursor to the feudal system against what he calls 'the vanity and ignorance of [the French] nation' in claiming that the laws and customs of Europe are derived from Frankish feudalism and can be directly traced no further back. The use of *Germania* as a major source for the Germans of several centuries later is not unusual; both Smyth and Miller use it when they begin to discuss the barbarian invasions of the Western Roman Empire in the third century, on the basis that a 'barbarian' society would not change much in a mere 200 years, indeed Gibbon does likewise. However, none of them so explicitly identifies Tacitus' account with property rights; if they do talk about something fundamental to the English constitution, it is the idea which becomes limited monarchy; that every man of the tribe has rights under the ruler.

In terms of social customs more generally, Bennet seldom draws parallels between ancient Germany and modern England; more often, he connects the Germans with contemporary 'primitive' peoples, especially the Highland Scots and Native Americans. He states that the Native Americans are presently at 'the same stage' of their development as the Germans of Tacitus' day. This is evidenced by their iron-clad attachment to their word of honour -Bennet quotes with approbation Montesquieu's assertion that lying is a civilised accomplishment - and their similar treatment of women; in both societies women do most of the day-to-day farming and herding, whilst men enjoy a sedentary lifestyle except for hunting and war. This naturally leads to chastity among the women, as they are too tired, and also too cold due to the unfavourable climate, to commit adultery! Militarily, the Germans are closely identified with the modern Highlanders; both would rather fight than work, so serve frequently as mercenaries, make superlative infantry and scouts, but show no talent for military engineering - this last is supported by reference to the memoirs of Gustavus Adolphus, who apparently could not make his Scottish mercenaries dig proper entrenchments.

Whilst fiercely honourable according to their own principles, Scots and Germans alike, according to Bennet, consider robbery and banditry against other tribes and peoples perfectly normal pastimes. Here Bennet makes an analogy which is well ahead of its time among ancient historians, comparing the Roman frontiers on the Rhine and Danube to the medieval

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167 See above, Ch3, pp.50-3 and A.Ferguson, *History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic* (3rd ed. 3vols, Dublin 1781) i 310
168 Ibid. *Germania* Preface 3 and 12.13-26
169 Ibid. *Germania* 15.20 and 4.18
and early modern 'Debatable Lands' between England and Scotland, frontier spaces where the
writ of Rome gradually faded away, rather than impenetrable defensive borders. This is
precisely the conception of the Roman Empire's borders currently held by most scholars, after
a century of bold frontiers being drawn on maps along rivers and defensive lines. Bennet
has to go to some lengths to create his picture of one 'stage of development' encompassing all
the Germans and also sustain their position as the warlike ancestors of the English. The tribes
described by Tacitus as peaceful, such as the Gothini and Gothones of modern-day Westphalia
Bennet claims were Celtic rather than Germanic, supporting this claim by a rather tenuous
appeal to the etymology of their names.

Bennet's notes offer a rare insight into what actually went on in college lectures. They are
dismissed by the likes of Michael Clarke as having usually consisted of no more than reading
and construing a text, based on the complaints of university reformers and a handful of
students' accounts, generally written by the most studious of students – the ordinary run of
undergraduates were no more keen then than now to reflect on their studies at length.

Doubtless this is true of many tutors' lectures, but others such as Bennet must have been
considerably better; Emmanuel was not considered one of the best colleges at Cambridge for
Classical tuition. Indeed, it was described in a pamphlet of 1788 as a college where 'Classical
Learning is entirely (or, if not all together) laid aside in most Colleges, learnt in so slovenly
and taught in so unscholarly a manner as to disgrace both Tutor and Pupil,' along with Trinity
and St John's. This critique is clearly unjustified, on the strength of Bennet's lectures, which
suggests they might be fairly typical of the usual run of college lecturing at the time.

From the structure of the lecture-notes, it is clear that many of Bennet's historical asides were
intended to be posed to students as questions, with the 'right answer' in the notes to expand on
or correct what the student said, and notes of some common errors. The latter is particularly
clear in the lectures on the Acts of the Apostles, where it would be important to correct
theological errors among a class of future clergymen, although Bennet does deliver a thinly-
veiled attack on a passage in the Apostles' Creed, arguing that 'he descended into Hell' is a

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171 Ibid. *Germania* 34.22

172 M. L. Clarke, *Classical Education in Britain 1500-1900* (Cambridge, 1959) p.72

173 Anon. *Remarks on the enormous expence of the education of young men in the University of Cambridge*,
(London 1788)
misreading of the original Greek which should simply read 'he was buried'.

Bennet's students were expected to come away from a term of his lectures with definite ideas about important questions, from the origins of English civil society and the early development of civilisation in Tacitus, to the ideal form of education and self-education in de Oratore, to the authorial intent behind the Acts of the Apostles. If they were not expected to think for themselves, they were at least expected to absorb quite sophisticated ideas about a real range of topics. Ancient history here serves several purposes. It displays the roots of modern history and modern society – perhaps with debateable accuracy, but undeniably claiming direct relevance to modern life. There is also a clear example of close antiquarian reading of texts. The notes on Tacitus are literally word-by-word, explaining and picking apart cultural and historical allusions. This would be both valuable for understanding the societies of first-century Rome and Germany, and as a training in forensic close reading for men who might one day scrutinise legal briefs or draft Bills.

If University College in the 1760s and 1770s was among the most academic colleges at Oxford, and the status of Emmanuel at Cambridge is debatable, Magdalen was notoriously among the worst-reputed, as Edmund Gibbon's Memoirs famously attest. However, Gibbon's strictures produced a variety of impassioned defences, most notably from the Rev. James Hurdis. Among other things, he lists the works on which Magdalen's undergraduates were examined in each term of their degree - four terms in each of four years. Unlike many colleges, Magdalen's undergraduates were almost all scholars (Demies) on the foundation and could be expected to stay the full four years; there were very few Commoners and Gentlemen Commoners admitted, which may explain in part, certainly Hurdis raises the possibility, why Gibbon was so unhappy. Whereas at Christ Church, Trinity or Oriel he might have found a number of like-minded souls, at Magdalen there were fewer than ten Gentlemen Commoners all told and the College had no real idea what to do with them. As late as 1791 it was necessary for the college Governing Body to pass a resolution to compel Gentlemen Commoners to take part in college examinations, long after this had become the practice at University College and Christ Church.

174 Emmanuel College MS 165 Lectures on the Book of Acts 2.22-7
175 Hurdis, Vindication of Magdalen College pp.14-17
176 See Darwall-Smith 'The Monks of Magdalen, 1688-1854', pp.277 and 303-9; Hurdis Vindication of Magdalen College p.27
Hurdis lists 22 works upon which 'every undergraduate of whatever denomination' was by the
time of writing examined publicly (before the President, Vice-President, Deans and resident
Fellows) over the course of his degree; all are classical literature, save the Gospels and
Epistles, and the vast majority are Latin. What is initially surprising, however, particularly in
comparison with Christ Church as we shall see, is the dominance of history. The list includes
the works of Sallust, Julius Caesar, the first six books of Livy, Xenophon's *Anabasis,*
*Cyropaedia* and *Memorabilia,* if those works can be counted in any sense as history, Tacitus'
*Annals* and selections from Cicero's orations. A student who read that collection diligently, and
sat close examinations on its meaning and content, would have had a solid grounding in both
the early history of Rome and the Civil Wars through the early principate, the two most
commonly-studied periods of ancient history.

The Magdalen list thus represents a substantial amount of history for undergraduates to read,
albeit a very conventional selection of texts which makes no nod to more interesting authors,
nor to the growing fashion for studying Greek history. The *Anabasis* and *Cyropaedia,* set early
on in the undergraduate career, suggest literary rather than historical readings. Both are in a
good straightforward style and remain common school-texts to this day, but neither is of huge
value *qua* history; the *Anabasis* is basically an adventure story, whilst the *Cyropaedia,* the
'Education of Cyrus' uses the historical Persian monarch as the basis for an ahistorical account
of an ideal prince and his upbringing. It should, however, be noted at this point that John
James resolved to read the *Anabasis* at Queen's because, unlike fictional characters or
philosophical abstracts, 'I consider [its characters] … as equally capable of vice and corruption
with myself, and the mention of their excellencies is a tacit sarcasm upon the man who is
destitute of them, as it informs him they have been possessed by others.'\(^{177}\)

From the second half of the eighteenth century to around 1810, a collection of around 40
undergraduate 'themes' (essays) by Magdalen undergraduates survives. The majority are 2-4
sides of notepaper long, on simple ethical questions, mostly written in Latin of varying
quality, but with more attention to Latinity than profundity. Some are in English, and these
tend to be shorter, bordering on inarticulate and often illegible, either desperately rushed or
written by students of very limited capacities or both. None, bar one, is on an historical topic,
but they provide a hint of what Hurdis' picture of undergraduate life meant in practise.\(^{178}\) The

\(^{177}\) John James to his father, 29/3/1779, *Letters of Radcliffe and James* no.29
\(^{178}\) Magdalen College, Oxford, MS 518
one exception is exceptional in other ways; it is co-signed by six students, is in English, and is much longer than the others, some 30 close-written pages. It is on 'The study of Antiquities' and gives a summary of the development of Classical art, a brief art-history of the Renaissance and the merits of studying it. The authors state that 'an impartial review... has evinced the superiority of those first polish'd ages in these respects'.

They opine that ancient art was a striving for immortality, aiming to preserve the memories of great men by 'setting civic merit second only to divinity.'

It is only towards the end that the point of this essay becomes clear; it praises the modern study of antiquities and the publication of new works on them for those so unfortunate as to have no opportunity of a Grand Tour, or in need of a guide-book. This is clearly a reference to Richard Chandler, Magdalen's finest scholar of the century, who published three books on Greek antiquities in 1774-6; it seems likely that the theme was presented to him in honour of one of the publications.

Thirty years later, George Chinnery took his fortnightly themes more seriously than many at Magdalen seem to have done; he sent drafts to his mother for her thoughts and worried deeply about negative comments from his tutors. Half, by then, were in English and half in Latin, perhaps acknowledging that a gentleman ought to be articulate in both languages, or that English themes would tend to give more opportunity to think about content rather than language. The topics still seem to have been mostly ethical and moral questions, despite the fact that Chinnery was studying maths and Homer at the time.

At around the same time as the Magdalen themes collection begins, at St John's Cambridge half-yearly examinations were instituted in the 1760s by W.S. Powell as Master, and were held up by the reformer John Jebb as examples to emulate. Copies of what would now be called examiners' reports for 1773-75 survive, bound into a copy of Jebb's pamphlets in the Bodleian. These reveal that the college's teaching was, as might be expected, largely mathematical, but at least one Latin author appears in each. Livy in 1774 is the only historian; the examiner notes that the students acquitted themselves very well and it was difficult to choose a top three

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179 Magdalen MSS 518.36
180 E.g. ChCh MS XLVIII a.42, Chinnery Correspondence f.92, f.108r and ff.169-175
181 J.Jebb, Remarks upon the Present Mode of Education in the University of Cambridge, together with a Proposal for its Improvement (4th edn) in the Bodleian as Gough Camb. 67. Other works in this collection are cited with the Bodleian shelfmark. The examination reports, in MS, constitute Items 9a through 9c in that collection. For further discussion of Jebb and his reform proposals see above pp.80-83
among the junior sophs (second-year students). Cicero's Second Philippic is the Latin prose in 1773, but the examiner does not comment further than noting students ought to be prepared to answer on any part of the set work, so it is hard to say whether it was in any sense read as an historical source.

Also included in the same pamphlet, presumably as another example of good practice, are the topics of 'Dr Green's lectures to his students at Clare Hall'; ancient history, plus the supporting studies of chronology and geography, occupy the second half of the first year; the history is both Greek and Roman and the principal authors to be used are 'Thucydides, Herodotus, Livy, Sallust and [Velleius] Paterculus'; a good if limited selection of the 'classical' periods of Greek and Roman history, Republican Rome and fifth-century Athens. Again, ancient history is taught at the start of the course, as we saw with Yarburgh earlier.

At Trinity Cambridge and Corpus Christi Oxford, there are large numbers of Scholarship and Fellowship examinations surviving from the last years of the eighteenth century. Some examples of such papers survive at Brasenose as well as several colleges in Cambridge, but are too few to generalise about, save that at Cambridge the fellowship exams focus almost exclusively on philosophy early in the century, and mathematics later on. In almost all cases, it is very difficult to distinguish scholarship and fellowship papers. The former were sat both by aspiring students and those already in place, but there do not seem to have been much greater demands placed on would-be fellows, certainly not a difference in kind. At Corpus, the scholarship exams followed a standard form; candidates were expected to translate a letter of Pliny or Cicero into English, translate a passage from the Spectator into Latin and write an essay in English on a prompt, usually a quotation on ethics from Seneca. Some scholarship candidates, perhaps those who were not already members of the College, wrote a letter of application in Latin to the President – these are sufficiently formal (and identical) that they were probably a set exercise rather than a first approach, though they are sometimes found with testimonial letters from teachers, parish clergymen, and relatives. Features which seem more likely to belong to fellowship exams include translating Milton into Latin, essays in Latin on Virgil, and essays in Latin on philosophical prompts in Greek.¹⁸²

At Trinity, the case is in a manner of speaking reversed from that at Corpus; we have the questions but not the answers, rather than the answers without the questions. Rather than the

¹⁸² CCC Archives MSS B/1/5/1-8
extended tasks at Corpus, the questions are short, and seem to seek short answers. Most are divided into sections and are dominated by mathematics and geometry. However, in over half of the 57 papers, which cover the years from 1773 to the early 1800s, there is a history section.183 Sometimes this is only a single question; in 1790's Fellowship exam it was 'At what time does History begin to be authentic? Into what periods are the first Ages generally divided, and what are the periods of sacred history which correspond to them?' which requires no great understanding to answer.184 A scholarship paper of the same year asks the following:

Give the dates of:
The Battles of Actium, Marathon, Cannae.
First Tribunes of Rome / Consuls / annual Archons of Athens?
Deaths of Seneca, Philip II, Pliny the Elder, Sylla, Pericles?
Plus:
Draw the Figure, & name the Coasts of the Mediterranean Sea.185

Fellowship exams in the 1780s seem to have had a run of more history-based papers; fully a quarter of the questions in 1784 were in the history section, 20 in total. Most ask for no more than a date or name, but they include 'What were the principal Causes of the Downfall of the Roman Empire?', 'In what did the Governments of Sparta & Athens chiefly differ?' and 'What are the Fabulous and Heroic periods of the Grecian history, & at what time does their history begin to be authentic?'186 Although expecting short answers, these might at least have required the would-be Fellow, probably a student or recent graduate of Trinity, to have read and thought a little about the ancient world. Two questions, both rather trivial, appear in 1784 on Byzantium, but otherwise there are no questions which might be considered 'modern history'.

However, the best-known and most comprehensive evidence of undergraduate work at any of the Anglican universities is at Christ Church, where Peter Quarrie and E.G.W. Bill have already published extensive notes on the Collections Books.187 Christ Church is a particularly interesting college and fortunate survival, because it was much the largest college and dominated by the upper classes. It was, in particular, by far the most-represented college in Parliament. Of 21 MPs discussed for their use of ancient history in parliamentary debate in Chapter 11, four definitely attended Christ Church, and one more may have done so.

183 These papers are in the Hodson/Challis collection at Trinity College, Cambridge. Trinity MSS Hodson/Challis
184 Hodson/Challis Collection, Box I, unnumbered
185 Ibid. 'Scholarship Paper ?1789', Box I, unnumbered
186 Ibid. Box 1 no.9
187 P. Quarrie, 'The Christ Church Collection Books' in Mitchell & Sutherland, History of the University of Oxford V pp.493-513, Bill, Education at Christ Church
It must be noted at the start that the Collections records are apparently not complete; if we accept the assertion of numerous contemporaries, as discussed by Bill, that every student in residence sat Collections, many names are missing from the detailed records. Authors' names and titles are sometimes mangled, students vanish between terms or appear reading the second half of a continuous work with no reference to the first. By far the most complete record of what students read, the Collections Books can still tell us nothing about how those works were read, and there is frustratingly little other evidence of teaching at Christ Church to fill it out. Christ Church, by the time of the most detailed records, was in any case an atypical college in its size and social exclusivity. It is thus dangerous to generalise too far from this single case.

These records fall into three parts; from 1701-16 there is a list of all the undergraduates 'collected' (examined) each year and the works covered by each, from 1717-69 a list of the required reading for undergraduates at each term of their careers, updated annually much like Hurdis' list for Magdalen, and from 1770-1810 each undergraduate admitted has his own page where his termly collections are listed. These divisions map, perhaps too neatly, onto the place of history therein; from 1701-17 there is a reasonable proportion, from 1718-69 almost none, and from 1770 the number and variety of historical works increases steadily, finally plateauing from the mid-1790s onwards at a level which would shame most modern Classics undergraduates however narrowly they tried to concentrate on ancient history, with modern history making occasional appearances for the first time since the 1700s. It may well be the case that the official reading list, especially in the middle period where no individual variations are listed, does not reflect everything that students actually read with their tutors, but there is certainly reason enough to agree with David Gregory's biographer that he revived the study of History at Christ Church in 1750s and 1760s.\footnote{Anon. Essay on the Life of David Gregory (London 1769) p.19}

In the period from 1700-17, we see a broadly typical classics course of the period; a selection of the canonical Latin authors and a handful of the more basic Greek. The listing at this point is annual and the average student was collected on about five works a year – as the numbers involved hover around 30 until 1714, when they rise sharply, it is clear that at this time many students were not examined. The selection of historians read is conventional, very similar to that at Magdalen a century later. Sallust is by far the most frequent appearance, read by, depending on the year, around 10% of students, followed in popularity by Caesar and
Xenophon, although we should remember that much of Xenophon is difficult to describe as 'history' and he tended to be used as an introduction to Greek prose. Some interesting additions to the list also appear, despite the conventionality of the majority. Eight students read the obscure late-imperial historian Herodian, one in 1714 read Xiphilinus' *Epitome of History*, which had at that time not been published in England.\(^{189}\)

Few works in English appear, most of them theological in nature, but four histories are among them; Clarendon's *History* is added to two by Laurence Eachard (his *Roman History* and *Ecclesiastical History*) and Kennet's *Antiquities*. The last appears only for a few years in the mid-1710s, but suggests a degree of antiquarian curiosity which is not often seen extending to undergraduates – the only other example of students reading antiquarian works is the theme dedicated to Chandler at Magdalen, discussed earlier. At around this time Nicholas Toke was reading Eachard and French classicists at University College where the fellowship contained several antiquarians, and Thomas Hearne had his finger on the pulse of British antiquarianism from his post in the Bodleian Library, but there is very little other evidence of students being involved.

The Eachard works are basic in the extreme; Eachard's *Roman History* was the first such work written and published in English, but as we have seen it was intended for schoolboys; the students who offered it for Collections might have known more about the course of Roman History than the readers of Sallust or Livy, but the odds are it was regarded, as offering English works would be a century later, or as writing English themes was at Magdalen, as rather a soft option.\(^{190}\) In the Magdalen themes, those in English are consistently of a very low academic level, and George Chinnery in 1808 regarded the offering of English works in Collections as a lesser achievement to his own Greek and mathematics. It would be curious if, in the far more Latinate university of the 1700s, reading schoolboy texts in English did not similarly indicate a low level of academic attainment. All lectures at that time would still have been expected to be in Latin, whereas by 1808 many, though not all, were in English.

The later period shows the flowering of serious academic work at Christ Church, which was at that time the favoured college of the aristocracy; as well as a large foundation of scholars, it attracted Gentlemen and Noblemen Commoners in their dozens. In the late eighteenth century,

\(^{189}\) The collection record in question reads 'Zeph. Graecae' – it could possibly also refer to Xenophon's *Hellenica*, but that is referred to by its correct title elsewhere.

\(^{190}\) See above p.121
perhaps as much as an eighth of Oxford's student body was at Christ Church and it was in many ways an institution unto itself, uniquely aristocratic, academic, and over-subscribed. In the 1790s the University's undergraduate body numbered a little over 1000; Christ Church in 1790-5 averaged 124 students listed in the Collections Books.\textsuperscript{191} Students who had satisfied Cyril Jackson of their academic credentials and who had received the college's leave to take their degrees often did not bother fulfilling the requirements to actually receive them. The fact that by the time the detailed records are available all students were theoretically required to sit Collections means numbers involved are much greater. However, there are quite a number of names of students with no collections recorded, who are disproportionately likely to be marked as noblemen, and still more with only occasional entries, whereas those with complete records of collections seem to have read, on average, 2-3 works or parts of works per quarterly term. These can be very unscientifically divided into readers primarily of verse, of theology or of prose (mostly history); although most undergraduates read in at least two if not three of those categories, it seems that one usually predominates, with perhaps a little mathematics. It is a pity for our understanding of the study of history that the prolific correspondent George Chinnery, by far our best source for the daily life of an undergraduate in Christ Church's glory days, delighted in mathematics and Greek verse and not in Thucydides or Tacitus.

The 'revival of history' alluded to by Gregory's biographer above began in a very small way; the first history on the generic collections reading list is found over 30 years into its existence. In 1756 Xenophon's \textit{Cyropaedia} appears under the reading list for the second-year students as the sole work of 'history' among 25; it vanishes again in 1757. From 1763, the same author's \textit{Anabasis} is found in the third year reading, along with Sallust's complete works for the freshmen, then in 1767, the last year with a specified reading-list for all undergraduates to follow, Caesar's \textit{Gallic} and \textit{Civil Wars} plus the first decade of Livy replace Sallust and the \textit{Cyropaedia} replaces \textit{Anabasis}. This last change represents a substantial increase in volume of material, though still consisting of fairly straightforward prose which would likely be familiar from school, where it might have been read through continuously or in small extracts, but in either case the focus at school would have been sharply confined to language.\textsuperscript{192}

Once we have individual collection records, the dominance of Sallust, Caesar, Xenophon and Livy continues into the 1770s, where they are joined by Herodotus and Thucydides among the

\textsuperscript{191} Stone 'Size and Composition of the Oxford Student Body' p.6 & 37, for Christ Church see Fig.1
\textsuperscript{192} Clarke \textit{Classical Education in Britain} pp.51-3 and see above, ch.2 pp.22-6
most-read authors (see fig.2). Some works commonly occur together; the vast majority of students who read Caesar's *Gallic War* also read the *Civil War* at some point, perhaps in a different term, whilst most students who read Sallust's *Catilinarian War* went on to read his other major work, the *Jugurtha*. In both cases, occasional appearances of the author's complete works as a separate collection listing may indicate that they were all taken up in the same term, although in both cases the separate titles sometimes appear listed for the same term, or that the authors' minor works were taken up as well. The latter makes sense for Caesar at least, but the minor works of Sallust are so minor it seems likelier that different tutors recorded the reading of both Sallust's histories differently.¹⁹³

¹⁹³ For Caesar, the minor works listed are the African, Alexandrinian and Spanish Wars, which appear separately, with roughly equal frequency; for Sallust 'his' three letters, now considered apocryphal.
Fig. 1 – student numbers at Christ Church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Average number of students listed at Christ Church each year. (whether Collected or not)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1768-1770</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1771-4</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1777-80</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1781-5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1785-90</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791-5</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 2 Works offered in Collections at Christ Church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Appearances 1770-9</th>
<th>1780-9</th>
<th>1790-1800</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sallust</td>
<td><em>Opera</em></td>
<td>35</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Bellum Jugurthinum</em></td>
<td>47</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Bellum Catilinum</em></td>
<td>54</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livy</td>
<td><em>Historia ab urbe condita</em></td>
<td>198</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thucydides</td>
<td><em>Peloponnesian War</em></td>
<td>119</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xenophon</td>
<td><em>Anabasis</em></td>
<td>110</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Cyropaedia</em></td>
<td>101</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Hellenica</em></td>
<td>43</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polybius</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plutarch</td>
<td>Any of the <em>Parallel Lives</em></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herodotus</td>
<td></td>
<td>192</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diodorus Siculus</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caesar</td>
<td>Commentaries (i.e. complete works)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Gallic War</em></td>
<td>105</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Civil War</em></td>
<td>54</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minor commentaries</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

194 From the list of students in each year in the Collections Books, followed in the later parts by the works offered by the individual students, which usually add up to a somewhat lower total, hence the assumption not all the students 'on the books' actually did attend collections.

195 Total number of times a title (in whole or substantial part) appears in the Collections Books as offered for Collections by a different student; repeats by the same student are counted as one.
The increasing emphasis on Greek has been remarked by Bill and Quarrie already;\footnote{Bill, \textit{Education at Christ Church} p.288} along with Thucydides and Herodotus, Homer was very commonly studied, and the Greek dramatists began to be as well, at least those works found in the most common collections. Herodotus and Thucydides were both considered good stylistic models; their popularity can be explained partly by this, partly because of the fund of good examples for young would-be statesmen found in Thucydides or the epic sweep of Herodotus' theme, and partly by the fact that of the Greek historians, those two have by far the most complete and least problematic texts. The popularity of Xenophon almost holds up, not forgetting the sharp increase in student numbers in fig.1, but in the 1780s there is a relative decline in the simplistic, moralistic \textit{Cyropaedia} and the all-action \textit{Anabasis} in favour of the \textit{Hellenica}, Xenophon's 'proper History' which takes up Greek history precisely where Thucydides leaves off and seems clearly intended as a direct sequel, beginning with the words 'following these events'.\footnote{Xenophon, \textit{Hellenica} I.1} In order to fully understand the \textit{Hellenica} it is necessary to have read, or at least to be familiar with, the events recounted by Thucydides; if a student were to read, as many did, the second half of Herodotus,\footnote{Most appearances of Herodotus are books 5-8 only, those dealing with the history of Greece. The first half covers the older civilisations and contains a great many far-fetched travellers' tales and garbled myths.} Thucydides and the \textit{Hellenica}, he would have covered all of Classical Greek history, ending just before the reign of Philip of Macedon. He could then append Plutarch's biographies or any of several more obscure works on Alexander himself to carry on another half-century. Due to a lack of good literary sources, the following Hellenistic period was seldom studied in detail, which remains the case in undergraduate Classics to this day.

The place of Roman history seems to have expanded less; Livy and Caesar remained popular, though Sallust did not; all three were perhaps squeezed to a degree by the increased presence of Greek. The number of works a student offered for collection per term, if it changed at all, fell slightly as several long works came to be read in parallel, so that a student might read, for example, the first four books of Thucydides and the first six of the \textit{Aeneid} in Michaelmas Term, and the second half of each work in Hilary, though some hard-working students got through tremendous quantities of material. Furthermore, Chinnery hints at a general expectation that even students who avoided history entirely would cultivate an awareness of Roman antiquities; he tells his mother that if he takes up the \textit{Georgics} of Virgil for collections in 1809, he will be expected to be totally familiar with the geography and agriculture of
ancient Italy, not just with Virgil's language. Moreover, the Greek historians of Rome, Polybius and Diodorus, appear for the first time at the end of the 1770s and became common in the 1790s. These are problematic authors; only the first 19 books of Diodorus survive and the text is far from straightforward, except possibly when compared to Polybius, whose history of Republican Rome is very fragmentary. Just Books 1-5 are more or less complete, along with substantial parts of 6 and numerous fragments, from an original 40. Quarrie states unequivocally that Books 1-2 only were read, but several collection records list the books individually, 1-5 'et reliquae 6' i.e. the surviving continuous portion. Books 2 and 6 are in any case those generally considered of broad relevance; 6 especially as it is Polybius' analysis of the Roman constitution and military, our main source for the army and institutions of the Republican period. It is hard to imagine any tutor setting Polybius and omitting Book 6, and whilst the majority of collections listings for Polybius simply give the author, there is sufficient evidence to suggest books 1-6 were a common if not universal portion. It seems probable, and previous studies have taken it as read, that Polybius was read more often in Latin translation than in Greek; translations were widely available, including editions with facing-page Latin and Greek texts.

Perhaps more interesting than the authors commonly read is the dramatic increase in the absolute variety of authors studied. Whereas in the 1770s the authors studied are similar for most students, clearly based on the general reading list of the 1760s, by the 1790s a large number of obscure or difficult authors begin to appear. Appian's works were brought up increasingly often in the 1790s; his account of the Civil Wars, so influential on the 'Enlightened narrative' of Roman history, does not appear before 1791, but 22 times in that decade, alongside others of his works. Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Justin also begin to appear around the same time; the former wrote on the *Institutions of Rome*, the latter covered the period of Alexander the Great and his successors. Perhaps the common thread here is the increasing commonality of authors with no perceived literary merit; historical interest had by the 1790s become enough of an academic justification not to need any kind of stylistic support - a student could never be made a better Graecist by Dionysius. Indeed, it needs considerable

199 Chinnery, *Correspondence*, ChCh MS XLVIII a.42 f.144v
200 Quarrie, 'The Christ Church Collection Books' p.497. Perhaps Quarrie refers rather to editions in two volumes, one containing the more or less continuous portion, the other containing the fragments of the lost books.
201 E.g. Isaac Casaubon's edition of 1623, reprinted frequently at least as late as 1764.
skill in Greek to make sense of some of his work, but it was nonetheless considered much worth reading for, presumably, its historical interest.

Another appearance - or rather reappearance, as we have seen it was present in the 1700s also in the 1790s is history written in English. It may well be that some works in English were always read, and simply did not appear in the 'general' reading-list which is all we have for the years from 1718-1769; where there are individual Collections lists some history in English is always found. By far the most common such work is Raleigh's World History, which appears 82 times from 1789-1800, but Stanyan's Greek History also makes 12 appearances, alongside a handful for Mitford's more up-to-date work (the first three volumes only, the others not having been published), plus Goldsmith, Ferguson and Hooke's Roman histories. Chinnery regarded with total scorn the gentleman commoner whose whole term's collection was on 'just a single play in Terence plus Robertson's History of Charles V in English' (emphasis original) compared to his own half of the Iliad and all Euclid. Although Ferguson and Hooke are substantial books, it is still likely that works in English were seen as a soft option for second-rate students, tolerated as a necessary evil in a college and university with absolutely no entrance standards. Modern history as a fit subject for examination is entirely absent in the period covered by complete Collection Books, but was obviously not unheard of by Chinnery's arrival in 1808. Although we know that medieval history was read by undergraduates almost a century earlier, there is no evidence prior to Chinnery that they were examined on it, even internally.

That said, there are curious absences; the whole period shows just a handful of entries for Tacitus' works, averaging one a year or so for the Annals and one a decade for the Histories. However, the Germania, Bennet's teaching text of the same period at Emmanuel, and his biography of Cn. Agricola the governor of Roman Britain, appear somewhat more frequently. Suetonius' Twelve Caesars appears once, as does Velleius Paterculus. The Historia Augusta and Dio Cassius do not appear at all, nor do any of the ancient or Byzantine epitomators save Florus, though by this time they were already being driven out of fashion by the widening knowledge of Greek. Although there is some vernacular history, Gibbon does not appear once. This means that effectively, ancient history for Christ Church men stopped with the death of Julius Caesar. This periodisation requires explanation and two possibilities arise. First of all, Suetonius and the Historia Augusta are risqué to a degree which might have been considered

202 ChCh MS XLVIII a.43, Chinnery Correspondence vol. 2 f.76r.
unsuitable for undergraduate study; a moralistic tutor might easily forbid students to read them for academic purposes.\textsuperscript{203} Tacitus' epigrammatic Silver Age Latin was rather out of stylistic fashion, as we see from Bennet's lectures above; his near-contemporaries Lucan, Petronius and Martial are equally neglected, though Juvenal is not.

The second possibility is more interesting; that the period of the Roman Empire was considered much less suitable for study, not just than the familiar Late Republic, but than any of Greek history or earlier Rome. Gibbon echoed Tacitus in lamenting how much less inspiring Imperial history was than Republican. Cecil Jenkinson, writing in 1801, mentioned that 'the latter part of the Roman History … is seldom included in the course of reading here' but might be reached by an unusually dedicated student such as, perhaps, himself.\textsuperscript{204} Unfortunately, it is difficult to draw conclusions from a bare absence. In isolation, Jenkinson's remark might suggest a single common course of reading followed by all students, but the evidence of the Collections Books is against this; more likely Jenkinson means simply that later Roman history was not often read, which does agree with the Collections records.

It seems plausible, though there is no direct evidence of a connection, that discussions of Roman tyranny might have risked getting too close to present politics.\textsuperscript{205} Jackson, after all, was the Dean who forbade the establishment of an official debating club in his College, despite the stainless characters of its members, because it might one day tend to create disciplinary problems.\textsuperscript{206} This speculation is based particularly on David Womersley's study of Gibbon's reception, mentioned earlier, where he suggests that ancient history specifically, rather than Classics in general, was capable of close association with Radicalism and was in some ways seen as a rather subversive study.\textsuperscript{207} The inclusion of Nathaniel Hooke among the very few moderns taken up for Collections at Christ Church could certainly raise such concerns; his defiantly populist interpretation of Roman history could easily be read as a thinly-veiled challenge to the social order.\textsuperscript{208} Although eulogies of fallen Republics could certainly be capable of that interpretation, it does not seem unreasonable to guess that Tacitus'
laments for the spinelessness of the oppressed upper classes, Suetonius' relation of the scandals of a decadent court, or the parade of royal grotesques in the *Historia Augusta* could seem even more subversive. In the 1760s there had been much furore over a newspaper seeming to compare George III to Tiberius. Gibbon was the foremost historian of the Empire, of course, but despite his Oxford background was *persona non grata* in the University, for his attitude to revealed religion more than his attacks on the university which did not appear until after his death.

This concatenation of political factors does not seem sufficient to completely explain the absence of imperial history from the Christ Church curriculum, but in combination with moral and stylistic concerns will have to suffice. In the earlier part of the century at University College the principal historians of the imperial period were read by Toke and Yarburgh. However, University College never had the aristocratic bias of Christ Church, and does not seem to have been run with the same systematic attention to its students' reading habits as Christ Church later was; both Toke and Stanhope considered themselves unusually studious.

Overall, then, we might appear to be very little advanced in attempting to place history in the familiar context of a decentralised, tutorial system where an extraordinary degree of academic freedom very often served as a licence to do nothing whatever. However, the teaching of history does provide several examples of the tutorial system at its best, as well as its worst, and the range of colleges and contexts in which history was taught demonstrates that it was broadly considered important, albeit rarely central, to the development of young men's character and understanding.

It is surely no coincidence, given the association between the training of statesmen and the study of history, that Christ Church, the most aristocratic of all colleges, was the most intensive in its study of ancient history. Although again we must beware of being biased by the fact that there is so much more evidence of what was read at Christ Church than elsewhere, we do have the counter-example of Emmanuel College, with only one 'work of history' among the seven Bennet lectures, and that (*Germania*) a borderline case as a title; whilst the book of Acts and Cicero on oratory might have been read primarily as historical sources, it seems they were not so used by Bennet. The (almost) exclusively classical curriculum at Christ Church might be considered stifling and outdated, having taken little account of any literary

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209 See e.g. *Monitor* nos.357, 22/5/1762, and 360, 12/6/1762, discussed below, ch.10
development after the first century AD. However, it was far from a simple training in Latin and Greek; the selection and range of works read clearly demonstrates that students were able, if not expected, to delve deep into ancient history or philosophy.

In the 1720s Nicholas Toke was able to choose his field of study, on the advice of an eminent tutor and academically-inclined uncle, and made considerable progress alongside studying for his BA. It is hard to see such a passion for discussing history one-to-one with an eminent antiquarian being indulged in any Scottish university at that date; even 50 years later, the professors of Edinburgh would probably have been too busy to give private tutorials to one wealthy Englishman. Stanhope and Fothergill (the latter unlike the others discussed here was not a rich man) also balanced the formal curriculum, such as it was, with private tutorials where their own interests were indulged. It seems from Gibbon's *Memoirs* that he did not have the same academic freedom - certainly he does not recall asking to dawdle through Terence - but as he also talks about, and blames Magdalen for, his great idleness it is not unreasonable to assign him some blame for the unstimulating nature of his studies, especially when coupled with his acknowledgement that when he came up he was relatively deficient in classical languages.

As Symonds noted in the 1800s, history as a study requires a great deal of reading. Lectures can introduce ideas, but are a very inefficient way to deliver large amounts of material – William Scott acknowledged this in his famous discussion with Dr Johnson, but for similar reasons to Symonds resolved to lecture on anyway. A college class of no more than two dozen students, probably many fewer, or a private tutorial, was and remains one of the best ways to enable an undergraduate to talk and think about all that intensive reading. History is an excellent example of the sort of material Thomas Reid of King's Aberdeen thought would be better covered by regents than professors; even without particularly deep knowledge of his subject, the regent could know his students well enough to discuss it with them and refine their work.210 It is not hard to see why Ludwig Holberg considered history a particular strength of the better sort of English scholar.211

In as much as we can say anything with confidence about the teaching of history in colleges –

210 See Part III below on Scottish Universities generally, and more particularly on Reid's defence of regenting A.C.Fraser, *Thomas Reid* (Edinburgh 1898) p.47
the reading of works of history, and the reading of other works as historical sources - in the
English universities, taken as a whole, there appears to have been rather more of it as the
century went on, and more interest in regularising and expanding it. This is seen particularly
with the expanded range of works examined at Christ Church and in the reading lists at
Magdalen, which are notably similar to those of 20-30 years earlier at Trinity Dublin. The
latter begin from an acknowledged position in the 1750s of very little academic work of any
kind being done, and that (as far as we know) purely literary in nature – even the theme
collection begins only in the late 1760s. On the balance of surviving evidence, more ancient
history was read at Oxford than at Cambridge. However, any conclusions must be tentative,
resting on a patchwork of disparate evidence preserved largely by accident; almost no courses
of study are attested by more than one source. In particular, we know a lot more about which
authors were read than about how they were read or what the college lecture looked like.

One more thing we can say is that historical study was apparently usually based on close
reading of a particular author rather than a period or topic, though Toke's antiquarian studies
on the roots of constitutional law may be an exception to this, indicating the existence of
alternative approaches. The method of recording studies by authors read may also disguise a
more periodised pattern of study at Christ Church where a large minority of students read the
latter half of Herodotus directly followed by Thucydides; a smaller number also read
Xenophon's Hellenica for a reasonably coherent progress through Classical Athenian history.
Large-scale 'outline' views of history seem to have been rarer; reading epitomes of large
swathes of ancient history is not very commonly reported, perhaps because those were seen as
any of a combination of intellectually trivial, easy to read independently, and relatively
lacking in literary interest or merit.
Part III: Ancient History in the Scottish Universities

Introduction

The Scottish universities, unlike those of England, were at the very centre of the Enlightenment. Having been reformed in the early years of the century along broadly Dutch lines, they were, by the late 1750s, perceived as being at the very forefront of what modern education ought to be, not least by their own professors. These included most of the leading figures of the Scottish Enlightenment, with the notable exception of David Hume. The success and expansion of Edinburgh and Glasgow was founded on their urban location, cheap fees and the fact that students could study for as many or as few years as they liked. The students in question could pack more than one class into the same year, though depending on the class in question, the feasibility of this ranged from 'obvious decision' to 'tremendous academic challenge'. Although Dublin possessed a much smaller, frequently dysfunctional collaboration between the Irish Royal College of Physicians and Trinity College, Edinburgh and Glasgow, offering an academic, open and affordable training in medicine, drew students from across the world, as well as Great Britain, for that purpose even more than for their undergraduate curriculum.

Compared to the English universities and Dublin, there is a great wealth of material from the institutional perspective: texts of lectures, syllabuses, advertisements of courses, and publications based on professorial lectures. Individual professors are sufficiently illustrious for their personal papers to have been preserved and even published. However, much less attention has been paid to the student perspective. Nineteenth-century university histories adopted a 'top-down' perspective on their institutions and modern authors interested in the noteworthy intellectuals of the Scottish Enlightenment, or in the urban public sphere more generally but not specifically the university, have done likewise. Whilst it is certain that more student accounts of the studies at Edinburgh or Aberdeen exist than the relatively few drawn on here, they have proven difficult to locate. A major research project on the student experience at Edinburgh or Glasgow in the late eighteenth century would be a valuable

undertaking.

However, one kind of source that does exist in profusion is student lecture notes. Lectures were intended to be taken down almost verbatim – a practice which only began to be challenged in the last years of the eighteenth century – and when we speak of a professor's lectures 'surviving' this usually means a student's copy, not a text in the professor's own hand. These vary in quality from beautifully re-copied in flawless script to utterly illegible. If they do not give us the professor's full text, they at least give us what a student thought were the essentials. The less-perfect copies are in some ways more informative about student life, whether early Edinburgh lectures on Antiquities jumbled up with Latin homework and logic reading lists, or immaculately copied moral philosophy lectures of the 1750s with fragments of poetry on the recto pages. However, between the lack of full original texts for comparison and the clear intention to take things down verbatim it is difficult to come to any firm conclusions about how students received their lectures in practice.

The place of history in the Scottish curriculum (or curricula) is much more complicated than the situation in England or Dublin. All five Scottish universities had a 'standard' curriculum, which was originally intended to lead to an arts degree, though the actual practice of graduating (save for the MD) fell into disuse from the 1690s as it entailed both a fee and a strenuous dispensation, until occasional attempts to revive it in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. These varied in details, but preserved an essential order; students would begin with Humanity (i.e. Latin) and Greek, and progress, possibly via Mathematics and Natural History, to Philosophy, which was variously sub-divided but took in Logic, Natural Philosophy and Moral Philosophy; originally Moral Philosophy was the last and most prestigious, a place increasingly occupied by Natural Philosophy as the century went on. This curriculum, which had in its essentials been established in the seventeenth century, although it continued to be tinkered with throughout the eighteenth, had no fixed place for ancient, or indeed modern, history, which is therefore found in a variety of other classes or as a largely extra-curricular

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3 The textual problems created by students' imperfect note-taking are discussed in the editors' preface to A.Smith (R.L.Meeke, D.D.Rafael and P.G.Stein, eds.), Lectures on Jurisprudence (Oxford 1978)
4 D.B.Horn, Short History of the University of Edinburgh (Edinburgh 1967) p.30
5 E.g. resolutions of the Edinburgh Town Council (the governing body of the university) dated 23 May 1777 and 24 March 1804, stating respectively that (i) in order to be waived their class fees prospective Divinity students must take Latin, Greek and all three Philosophy courses but could do so in any order that pleased them as long as individual professors were satisfied, and (ii) that in order to proceed to Divinity the philosophy classes must be taken in three separate years. In A.Morgan (ed.), University of Edinburgh Charters, Statutes and Acts 1583 – 1858 (Edinburgh 1937)
study.

The rationale behind the focus on philosophy reflects the expected student base of the Scottish universities: local, not overly wealthy, prospective divines and professionals, who needed moulding into good citizens, good Presbyterians and good preachers, in that order. This was achieved by extensive training in practical ethics and civic responsibility in the Moral Philosophy class, by arguments for the glorious work of God in the natural world, and counters to Deist criticisms grounded in scientific ideas, which were covered by Natural Philosophy, which increasingly became a 'utilitarian' subject in its own right as well, and lastly by rigorous argumentation in the form of Logic, with or without Rhetoric, which gradually decreased in popularity and importance.

There would be two main reasons to follow this course, apart from recognising the separate value of each of its components. First, that the Latin and Greek were necessary to follow the Philosophy; lectures were universally in Latin until the late 1720s, and clung on in some cases into the 1770s. Logic once occupied a similar position as a preliminary to ethics, as it was necessary to understand the forms of disputation in order to take part, but the decline of the Aristotelian syllogism and of logic in the other branches of philosophy reduced its significance. The second reason is the requirement of the Kirk that prospective ministers ought to have certificates indicating their attendance at classes of Greek and the several branches of Philosophy before they could be admitted to what was effectively post-graduate study of theology in 'Divinity Hall', hence three- to five-year Humanity, Greek and Philosophy in succession are sometimes referred to as the 'Divinity Hall curriculum' as well as the 'undergraduate curriculum' - not that followed at Divinity Hall, but the necessary preliminaries to study there. This system dates to the seventeenth century, and remained in existence until the 1840s, albeit with considerable variation in what was required to gain a certificate of attendance, depending on the university and professor in question. Various bodies within the Scottish Presbyterian tradition maintained their own Divinity Halls, but those attached to the Universities and particularly Edinburgh were the most prestigious.

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8 This system is explained by A.Grant, *Story of the University of Edinburgh During Its First Three Hundred Years* (2vols Edinburgh 1897) i 283 and in Campbell, 'Carlyle and the University of Edinburgh' pp.56-8.
9 I.Campbell, 'Carlyle and Divinity Hall' in *Literature and Belief* vol.25 (2005) p.3
Many of the 'curricular' subjects also had a 'private class', where students paid slightly more to be taught in smaller groups and in more depth; these came and went rapidly depending on student interest and the professor's workload. Slightly more formal 'second classes' also existed, where a subject was split over more than one year; at one time Edinburgh possessed a Third Humanity Class, but Second Classes of Mathematics, Greek and Humanity were common at Edinburgh and Glasgow.¹⁰

Many students in the second half of the century, especially at Glasgow and Edinburgh, were the sons of tradesmen and merchants, who neither knew nor needed Latin or Greek, but attended the philosophy lectures which would make them better and more capable merchants, by giving them an understanding of ethics, some basic science and, especially, economics.¹¹ As the merchant class gained more power in Scotland, especially with the removal of much of the political establishment to London, the desire and pressure to express, and to inculcate in their children, civic virtue and practical skills for the mercantile world increased. The Scottish professions were similarly important to the life of the university; both legal and medical as well as clerical training were concentrated in the universities, unlike in England and Ireland. The philosophical curriculum was relevant at least in part to the other professions as well as to Divinity. Prospective lawyers would benefit from training in logic as well as in natural law and the ethical parts of moral philosophy; natural philosophy and mathematics formed a conceptual and practical basis for post-graduate medical study.

Whilst large numbers of occasional students and interested townspeople might attend any one of the standard classes, especially if it had a well-respected professor in charge, it was much more difficult to attract interest to a non-curricular subject. The requirement for attendance certificates ensured a solid base of students who could be expected to last out the year. The main growth area in non-curricular subjects in the eighteenth century was the establishment of lectureships, and later professorships, in subjects such as botany, chemistry or surgery which were ancillary to medicine.¹²

¹⁰ See the returns in Evidence, oral and documentary, taken and received by the Commissioners for Visiting the Universities of Scotland 1826-30 (4vols. London, 1837) which show in the statistical annex to each volume which classes were held and numbers for approx. 1790-1825.

¹¹ Visitation Evidence ii 561 states that it is common for Glasgow students to not attend the languages classes; ii 102 that about half of students in Moral Philosophy are following the “general course of studies”, and ii 76 that most students in Greek do not intend to take the Philosophy classes and (it is implied) vice versa.

¹² See on the foundation of Glasgow chairs the list in M.S.Moss, M.Rankin & L.Richmond, Who, where and when: The History and Constitution of the University of Glasgow (Glasgow 2001) p.76. The eighteenth-century new foundations there (excluding the five Regencies being converted into Chairs of the five subjects in the Divinity Hall course) are Anatomy, Botany, Chemistry, Materia Medica and Medicine for the
This presented difficulties for the study of history as a subject in its own right. At all the Scottish universities save King's College Aberdeen, some provision was made specifically for the teaching of history, including ancient history. However, at none of them could it really be called a success. Many reasons have been suggested for this; among them, a feeling that history in its own right as it was taught in Scotland was not a useful subject to the majority of students, the rise of Political Economy as an alternative, more 'rigorous' means of understanding the roots and trajectory of society, poorly-structured appointment processes leading to second-rate professors, or something in the Scottish psyche which found History insufficiently schematic and theoretical.  

However, there were three major contexts in which history was taught and studied as part of other subjects. First of all, the Humanity classes entailed more than simply reinforcing students' knowledge of Latin grammar. Humanity was not treated as an end in its own right, but as a useful foundation for other subjects. As such, the highest reaches of literary attainment were not the main goal of study. Once students could read Latin verse and prose, and understand lectures delivered in simple Latin, the class' job was done in that regard. Many Humanity classes included a series of lectures on Roman Antiquities, a 'schematic' overview of Roman institutions rather than narrative history following the sixteenth-century model of the 'four antiquities', which although brief, sketchy and often rather ahistorical in their treatment of particular institutions as frozen in time, could serve as a basis for further study, especially in Roman Law.  

Second, the Divinity students, with the exception of those at Aberdeen, had Professorships of Ecclesiastical History provided for their betterment; ecclesiastical history necessarily ended up covering a good deal of secular ancient history – in particular the otherwise neglected history of late antiquity – to provide context for more purely religious material. These lectures were in practice restricted to post-graduate students. Their range, regularity and indeed existence, varied depending on the incumbent Professor, his notion of his duty, the amount of lecturing he was prepared to do, and the expectations of the rest of the Faculty as well as the medical/scientific side, against only Oriental Languages, Scots Law and Church History for the arts and Divinity. An equivalent (and very similar) list for Edinburgh is in Horn, *Short History of Edinburgh* p.41 e.g. Dugald Stewart contending for the primacy of political economy over history (see Ch.9), Sir James Mackintosh in his evidence to the 1826 Commission of Visitation (see below ch.6) arguing the cultural predisposition of Scots students to abstract studies; Horn, *Short History of Edinburgh* p.59 notes that the Chairs not under the patronage of the Town Council tended to be less capably filled.
founder of the Chair. In general, the lectures offered, often over several years, a comprehensive history of the Christian Church at least down to the Reformation, emphasising the earlier period to demonstrate the ancientness and orthodoxy of the Kirk's doctrines. Although they had relatively little time to address secular history with so much ground already to cover, and assumed some knowledge of Roman and Greek society, which was doubtless a secondary motivation for the establishment of 'Roman Antiquities' courses, there was some coverage of late Roman and early medieval society in general. Some courses also included the pre-Christian history of the Holy Land as it affected Jewish history.

Where most students would encounter the historical past most deeply and thoughtfully would be the year devoted to Moral Philosophy. This study was at the heart of the Scottish Enlightenment and of Scottish education; it took place in the penultimate or final year of study and attracted (or produced) a dazzling array of philosophers, including Adam Smith, Dugald Stewart and Adam Ferguson. Although even at the start of this period Scottish moral philosophy had gone well beyond ancient political philosophy, those parts of the courses which dealt with political philosophy or the new science of political economy still drew heavily on the ancient world for examples, case-studies and ideas.

It is also useful to briefly consider the common practice of beginning lecture courses in any discipline with a few lectures on the history of the discipline in question; these could be closely grounded in real events, or 'conjectural histories' of the kind made famous by Adam Smith, and appear, inter alia, for Mathematics, Medicine, Metaphysics, Anatomy, Law and Natural Philosophy, as well as Adam Smith's better-known *History of Astronomy*. These did not necessarily add a great deal to students' knowledge of history in general, often not even to that of the history of science, as they seem to have usually been fairly brief, but their existence does require some consideration and explanation. Alexander Monro (or Munro) the Elder, for example, opened his course of lectures on Anatomy with a set of about a dozen lectures on the history of the subject. This was the course famously inherited, and delivered almost verbatim, by his son and grandson who succeeded him in the Chair.

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16 Edinburgh University Archives E2/68
Monro's lectures do not seem to explain their own rationale; he gives no hint of why his course begins with a history of the subject. The first lecture's notes are somewhat fragmentary and there is the gnomic sentence 'It behooves us to begin with the history, in treating of which all endeavour to show,' but what they endeavour to show, or why it behooves us, was not regarded as important by the student taking what were otherwise apparently comprehensive notes.\textsuperscript{17}

Monro's discussion of the very beginnings of anatomy is mostly based in religious practice, especially divination from the entrails, giving the ancient Greeks and Egyptians a rudimentary understanding of anatomy – there is also a brief acknowledgement of the Egyptians' skill in embalming, and Homer's knowledge of the location and function of the bladder. The development of medical anatomy begins with the students of Pythagoras and includes robust defences of Hippocrates, the Alexandrian physicians of the Ptolemaic period and especially Galen as founding fathers of the discipline, the giants on whose shoulders recent developments stand. He is considerably less kind to Aristotle, arguing that although his \textit{Anatomy} is lost, the comical misunderstandings in the \textit{Animals} demonstrate that he was credulous in accepting theories and stories as long as he could fit them into the theme of a work.\textsuperscript{18}

Interestingly, Monro notes that Aristotle has his defenders – jealous physicians who respond to new discoveries by finding something in Aristotle that can be said to prefigure them. In light of the discredited status of Aristotelian logic and natural philosophy, he emerges as a necessary enemy, a figure who is contested not as an ally and supporter, but a brush with which to tar opponents – accusations of Aristotelianism could suggest a rival medic was behind the times, unscientific, even dangerous. The apparently neutral and introductory gallop through the history of the discipline thus serves as an act of careful positioning by Monro against his competitors, as the voice of the scientific tradition, building on the learning of the ancient world whilst acknowledging and crediting the advances made by modern scholarship. The degree of progress since the time of Aristotle is highlighted, but the appearance of risky innovation, and the throwing out of the baby with the bathwater of primitive ancient understandings, is limited.

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid. opening page
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid. end of §1
The long history ascribed to anatomy, and other scientific subjects, might have served to justify their inclusion as 'university learning'. Monro was the first professor of anatomy in a British university and the first serious, practical teacher of medicine in such a university in a long time. Whilst Medicine was one of the medieval Faculties along with Arts, Law and Divinity, it had long been studied either overseas, generally in the Low Countries, or by practical apprenticeship, rather than by lectures and examinations in Scotland, or indeed England. The long and dignified history of the subject could have served as justification for its revived status in the university as equal in standing to Divinity and Law. The apprenticeship tradition meant medicine in general and anatomy (with its association with surgery) in particular risked being seen not as a *techne*, an art, suitable for systematic teaching, but a mere set of mechanical skills, an *atechnos tribe*, to borrow the distinction from Plato. The status of 'physician' was often taken, in England and beyond, to imply an Olympian disdain for mere surgery, which was seen as requiring more exertion and less skill – the connection with barber-surgeons was still strong and while a physician needed a knowledge of anatomy it was still more associated with surgery.

There is also a clear practical logic to the practice of opening a lecture course with a historical overview of the discipline. The minutes of governing bodies and Visitors at the Scottish universities abound with concerns and complaints about the gradual shortening of the academic year. Students were invariably keen to arrive late and leave early, to maximise the length of summer in which they could earn money to maintain themselves through the winter, and thereby pay their fees. Anatomy students who had missed the first practical demonstrations or even theoretical lectures were unlikely to catch up – the same would be true of most natural philosophy or practical courses. It is reasonable to suppose that the opening lectures were considered a useful, but ultimately dispensable, preliminary, whilst the last few students trickled in from the country. They might also have served to whip up enthusiasm for the course among students for whom it was either entirely voluntary, or an unwanted imposition on their more theoretical (and prestigious) studies. In general, the history of a particular science might be taken as a chance to explain its philosophy, to justify its place in the curriculum and the payment of the professor's fee. As history had a valued place in moral philosophy as a teaching aid, so it could explain the development of natural philosophy, either

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20 This concern is discussed by C.A.McLaren, *Aberdeen Students 1600-1860* (Aberdeen, 2005) pp.35-6, 67
simply as a succession of paradigm-shifting discoveries, as in Monro's lectures, or more subtly as a necessary component of human nature, as in, for example, Adam Smith's *Essay on the History of Astronomy*, which did not deal with ancient history and is thus not discussed here, but used the form of a history of a scientific discipline to lay out theories about human nature and social development.
Chapter 6 - Civil History

The place of History in the formal curricula of the Scottish Universities has generally been reduced to a footnote. Only at Marischal College, Aberdeen, was it ever added to the 'regular' or 'Divinity Hall' course, and even there in the odd form of 'Civil and Natural History', a counter-intuitive combination which nonetheless survived until 1860 and was even repeated at St Andrews from 1854-97, though there are few instances of any civil history being taught in the latter case. However, Edinburgh and St Andrews founded Chairs of Civil History in the course of the eighteenth century, and Glasgow had a Lectureship in the same subject for at least a short period in the early years of the century, and at occasional intervals into the nineteenth century until at last in 1893 it became the last of the seven surviving ancient universities to introduce a salaried Professorship of History. At Glasgow, the statutes of 1582, the 'New Foundation', placed history alongside physics as a proper subject for the baccalaureate or fourth year, but this had fallen out of use by the Restoration and it is not recorded who, if anyone, was responsible for its teaching. These posts were also commonly referred to as 'Universal History' and their general approach was to cover the history of the world from the Creation, or at any rate the beginning of reliably recorded secular history, onwards. As much as half of such a course would focus on the ancient world, that is on secular history to the middle of the first millennium AD.

The elder and more active of the Chairs of Civil History was that of Edinburgh, which was founded in 1719, initially with a salary of £50, '...to enable our youth to study at home with equal advantages as they do abroad' because 'a profession of Universal History is extremly necessary to complete the same, this profession being very much esteemed and the most attended of any one profession at all the Universitys abroad, and yet nowhere set up at any of our Colledges in Scotland.' The foreign establishments in question are those of the Netherlands, where history was considered a basic foundation for the higher faculties of almost equal importance to the learned languages. The first holder of the chair, Charles Mackie discussed later in this chapter, had been educated at Leiden and Groningen and imported his courses more or less wholesale from the equivalents there. St Andrews' Chair was not founded until 1747, and that of Marischal College six years later. The assertion that

21 The Commissioners of Visitation recommended abolishing the St Andrews chair - 'Report of the Visitors' in Visitation Evidence iv p.45 (the Report is paginated separately after the end of the Aberdeen evidence and recommendations).
22 Mackie, University of Glasgow, p.75
23 A.Morgan (ed), University of Edinburgh Charters, Statutes and Acts (Edinburgh, 1937)
history was very popular overseas is perhaps coloured by the fact that it was considered essential to the training of a civil lawyer, and most of Scotland's advocates who had any academic training before the middle of the eighteenth century received it in Holland, where the universities were indeed very keen on teaching at least an outline view of European History.\(^{25}\)

A similar proposal had been made at Glasgow in 1707, in order to create a counterpart to the newly enhanced Chair of Humanity, which had previously lacked a regular salary itself, and set on an inferior level to the four Regents, and a salary for the blind autodidact William Jameson, who was 'Lecturer in Civil History' from 1691-1716.\(^{26}\) Jameson's post was apparently an informal arrangement which meant only that the university endorsed the public lectures Jameson gave in the city and perhaps provided a room; he was not paid, nor did he receive any of the perquisites of a professor or an endowed lecturer. No records appear to exist of his lectures, but we may glean something from the fact he was appointed on the resignation from the Regency of Humanity of James Knibloe, who in the last year of his tenure had 'and History' added to his title by Principal Dunlop, who was Historiographer Royal of Scotland. The post was then unoccupied for a period of around 14 years 'for want of funds'.\(^{27}\) In 1705 the first Professor of Humanity to hold equal status with the other Regents, William Rosse, was enjoined by the resolution which re-established the chair 'to teach the Roman Antiquities' along with other topics not covered in the Grammar School, so Jameson's lectures after that date must have been on other topics.\(^{28}\)

From 1727, it was occasionally provided that Glasgow's Professor of Ecclesiastical History ought also to be Lecturer in Civil History, but the Commission of Visitation in 1827 found little evidence of any such Professor holding civil history lectures; the closest that is recorded is William McTurk, who was appointed as Assistant and Successor to the ageing Hugh Macleod in 1797 on the condition that he would 'receive all the fees and perform all the labour of a civil history class',\(^{29}\) which we can therefore say with reasonable confidence came into existence at the time. He continued to do so for some time after, though it appears to


\(^{26}\) J.D. Mackie The University of Glasgow 1451-1951 (Glasgow, 1954) p. 140

\(^{27}\) Glasgow University Archives MS 47447 (Petition of Andrew Rosse, Professor of Humanity, relating to the augmentation of his salary, 24 December 1722)

\(^{28}\) Glasgow University Archives, Minutes of Faculty vol.19 p.42 (hereafter GUA, Minutes)

\(^{29}\) GUA, Minutes, vol.80 p.155
have ceased to be taught by 1802 for want of students.\textsuperscript{30} McTurk is clear in his evidence to the Commission that his predecessor Macleod did not teach civil history. Class numbers support this, being recorded in Civil History only from 1796-1801 and never reaching double figures.\textsuperscript{31} Perhaps not coincidentally, 1802 was the first year in which a fee became payable for the Ecclesiastical History course which would have placed McTurk's income on a considerably more stable footing without the need to run a second lecture course.\textsuperscript{32} 

To return to Edinburgh, the Chair of History there was held by Charles Mackie from 1719 down to 1776, a long tenure even by the standards of the day. He served through the transition from the seventeenth-century Town College to the University of Adam Ferguson and Hugh Blair. Until the last twelve years of his Professorship, when an assistant was appointed to discharge many of his duties, he lectured regularly and apparently in multiple different courses, which was unusual for a Professor of his day when most others combined the material they wanted to cover in the year into one, or at most two, continuous courses. Mackie's papers survive in profusion at the University of Edinburgh, and contain substantial parts of two courses of lectures as well as several texts of what appear to be occasional lectures.

Mackie set out his purpose in a fragmentary and untitled lecture of 1727 on the 'Study of History', preserved in his commonplace book.\textsuperscript{33} Whilst there are a couple of similar lectures surviving from Anglican professors, particularly Thomas Warton's inaugural lecture, Mackie's is a very different undertaking; not so much an encomium of the merits of studying history or of Mackie's historical philosophy as a practical manual for interpreting historical works. It consists primarily of warning against pitfalls for the unwary historian, demonstrating how essential it is that the subject be carefully studied and taught. In particular, Mackie notes that most authors of a past age, unless writing about their own times, had no sound evidence - 'no monuments' is the phrase used - other than that something rang true and made an amusing or improving story. This, he says, is particularly true of Roman and Scottish history, which were taken by enthusiastic authors back centuries beyond the earliest sources. The other principal traps of which Mackie warned are on the same theme. First, he mentions the tendency of family or tribal tradition to inflate the significance of events. Among the particular cases he raises are those of Camillus, of whom Polybius had never heard less than 150 years after his

\textsuperscript{30} D.Coutts, \textit{History of the University of Glasgow} (Glasgow, 1909) pp.325, 356
\textsuperscript{31} Visitation Evidence ii 527
\textsuperscript{32} Visitation Evidence ii 84 (examination of William McTurk)
\textsuperscript{33} Edinburgh University Library MS LA.II.37/2, fos.105-117
supposed crushing of the Gauls, and of Horatius holding the bridge alone; the latter point is
made by Macaulay in his *Lays of Ancient Rome*.34 Second, the prevalence of wholly forged
documents, which is particularly associated with Popery:

One reason for the many forgerys [sic] in History both Ecclesiastic
and Civil is that it has been reckoned of interest of the publick that
such and such should be believed by the vulgar. What numberless
legends have been swallowed down nay even sanctified by the
Church of Rome, who formed their account in imposing upon the
credulity of the people by these Fables?35

The wise historian will retain a strong sense of scepticism, and in particular will look to the
accounts of the defeated to get a truer sense of military or political events; it is greatly to be
deplored that no Persian accounts of Alexander the Great, or Carthaginian accounts of
Hannibal, survive. This lecture appears to be largely identical to a paper given to the
Edinburgh Philosophical Society in 1741, which is bound in with the same commonplace
book and covers much the same ground albeit with a more specific focus on the errors of
Scottish history; it is entitled ‘A dissertation on the sources of Vulgar errors in history and
how to detect & rectify them.’36

Aside from this introduction, the principal of the lecture-courses is a relatively long course,
of 'Universal History', which covers the period from (presumably) the Creation, down to the
anathematisation of Martin Luther in 1531. It is described by the *Scots Magazine* as lasting
from 1 November to around the middle of May, i.e. practically the full Scottish academic
year.37 No complete text survives, but there is a copy of the practically verbatim lecture notes
taken down by a student in 1747 from no.32 to the end of the course at no.124, as well as an
extremely rough and partial copy in Mackie's own hand from c.1741.38 The content is
avowedly based on Tursellinus' *Epitome Historiarum* and parts of the notes preserve his
chapter breaks, but it draws on a great variety of other authors including all the principal
classical authorities. Orazio Torsellino or Tursellinus was a sixteenth-century Italian Jesuit,
author of an epitome of universal history which, despite its theological and scholarly
shortcomings from the point of view of an early eighteenth century Dutch university was the
standard textbook of universal history at Utrecht and Leiden.39 In Mackie's commonplace

34 Ibid. ff.105r-106r
35 Ibid. f.107r
36 EUL MS LA.II.37 ff.92-100
37 *Scots Magazine* no.3 (1741) pp.370-4
38 EUL MS LA.II.237
books are two very comprehensive lists of 'the best historians treating of all periods', as well as lists of 'new books published and to be purchased' which are dominated by historians.\textsuperscript{40}

Mackie had been a student at Groningen and Leiden, and retained close connections to the Low Countries and their academic community. His appointment and his lectures were both modelled on contemporary Dutch practice; as well as Tursellinus, he recommended to his students the handbook on Roman Antiquities produced by his own former tutor, Pieter Burman, and the lectures on Antiquities draw on it also. However, he differs from the earlier Dutch authorities in the extent of his use of modern authorities to check and update his lecture-courses.\textsuperscript{41}

The ancient world dominates the course, and ecclesiastical history is closely intermixed with secular; it would be interesting to know what the Professor of Ecclesiastical History thought of this intrusion on his province. The surviving text begins, 32 lectures in, and dated 23\textsuperscript{rd} November, which is probably a transcription error for 'December' as the following lecture is dated December 26\textsuperscript{th} and the rest follow in sequence. Each lecture is dominated by events in one of three geographical areas: the Holy Land and the East, Italy, or Greece, though all three are usually mentioned in an attempt to preserve a loose chronology. 31 lectures had brought the course down to Darius granting liberties to the Jews (Ezra 6.2), with much discussion of Scaliger and Ussher's respective contentions as to the place of this event in Greco-Roman chronology, and the expulsion of Tarquinius Superbus from Rome. In other words, a quarter of the way through the course Rome had barely been founded and Classical Greece was just beginning.

Discussion of Rome is surprisingly limited; until after the time of Christ, it receives barely more attention than Greece or Persia. Greece is treated largely in cultural terms, for example Lecture 35 is dominated by the early history of Greek philosophy down to Socrates, 36 by Greek statuary and painting, and 38 by drama. By contrast, one lecture disposes of the Golden Age of Roman literature, with the faintest of praise for Virgil that 'the Criticks find fewer faults in it than in any other work whatever' and its great length contains 'nothing mean or trifling' - Horace meets with only slightly more enthusiasm. Evidently, Mackie felt that the separate course he gave on Roman antiquities allowed him to omit much discussion of Roman culture in the history course.

\textsuperscript{40} EUL MS Dc.5.24(1)
\textsuperscript{41} Mijers, Republick of Letters pp.166-74 discusses Mackie's personal influences in greater detail.
Philological digressions are also common; for example, Lecture 45 covers, along with the Seleucid kings of Syria, various accounts of the translation of the Septuagint, concluding that they are highly illogical and almost certainly false. No. 58 covers along with Roman letters in general the authenticity of Q. Curtius Rufus' works, coming to the correct conclusion that they are much more recent than medieval tradition claims. However, the lecture takes no firm stand on their actual date on the grounds that, whilst sufficiently ignorant of geography and Republican institutions that they may well be entirely spurious, other Imperial historians are sometimes no better informed.

It is interesting to note that, along with the general tendency to deemphasise the place of Rome in the course, the account of the fall of the Roman Republic is even briefer; despite being the best-attested of all Classical periods. Lecture no.50 ends with the death of Tiberius Gracchus and 57 with the battle of Actium; no historical individual rates any in-depth discussion except Julius Caesar, and Cicero is less mentioned in the course than Darius II. Caesar is treated very sympathetically throughout as both a general, which is to be expected, and a statesman; whoever Mackie would cast as the destroyer of the Roman Republic, it is not the last Dictator. Rather, the conventional narrative of conquest and wealth leading to corruption, luxury and unrestrained egotism among the upper classes following the conquest of Greece, which dates back at least to Livy, is repeated, with added criticism of the corn dole which encouraged indolence among the peasantry.

This leaves even less time for any discussion of the Roman Empire, which is covered from foundation to collapse in 20 lectures, about a third of which are taken up with ecclesiastical matters under three principal headings. First, he covers the historical evidence for the life of Christ, which has one whole lecture to itself (no.59). Second, the clear falsehood of the Apostolic Succession of Bishops of Rome on the grounds of the Catholic tradition's blatant inconsistency with itself and with the account of St Peter's life in the Book of Acts, thus demonstrating that the authority of the Popes is not merely based on an historic lie, but actively heretical. Third, expounding the historical authority of Presbyterianism, in that the early heads of the Church were first among equals, and known equally as bishops or presbyters. After the sack of Rome, chronology is finally discarded and the first forty lectures on the modern world divide roughly equally between events in the Byzantine Empire or Holy Land and Western Europe. Some discussion of Scottish history since the 11th Century, though
very little indeed of England, is added in the last ten lectures. Mackie apologises for not covering ancient Scotland, but notes that if there ever were reliable records they were destroyed 'in the contest of Bruce and Balliol' when many unique MSS relating to Scottish history were handed over to Edward I and destroyed. It is, says Mackie 'sufficient proof of the antiquity and glory of the Scots that they set at naught the power of Rome and are noticed by so many ancient Authors'; this echoes his remarks in the Lecture on the Study of History that the 'obscure or legendary' period of Scots history runs down much later than elsewhere.\footnote{EUL MS LA.II.37/2, f.105r}

Mackie's other annual course supplies much of what is absent in his Universal History's treatment of Rome and probably explains why the latter seems so abbreviated. This course was much shorter, beginning (according to the \textit{Scots Magazine}) in March and ending in mid-May with the academic year, and devoted entirely to Roman Antiquities. As the Universal History course is based on Tursellinus, this course is clearly based on Pieter Burman's \textit{Antiquitatum Romanurum Brevis Descriptio}, which Mackie caused to be published in Scotland in 1721 and recommended to his students.\footnote{Mijers, \textit{Republick of Letters} p.161} Burman had been Mackie's teacher at Leiden, and compared to the universal history course there is much less in the way of scholarly apparatus and regular updating visible in the text of the lectures.\footnote{Examples from the Advocates' minutes on this topic are in D.B.Horn's working papers, EUL MS Gen 1824 Box 1, under “Civil History”.}

This course was intended for future Advocates, and it was frequently recommended by the Faculty of Advocates that its prospective members should have to pass an examination in Roman Antiquities, as an understanding of the social roots of Roman Law was necessary in order to be able to effectively make practical use of Civil Law.\footnote{EUL MS LA III 785} Only half of the text survives, divided into two sections of an original four.\footnote{EUL MS LA.II.37/2, f.105r} The first, much shorter, section appears to have been an introductory few lectures, and deals with the periodisation of Roman History, in the course of which it names some of the key authors, gives their dates and particular specialisms, and in some cases an appreciation of their value as sources. This section also gives a list of key dates which students will need to bear in mind, and compares Livy and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, largely to the disadvantage of the former, to give a usable chronology of the early history of Rome.

The second and much larger section deals with Roman religion in a schematic fashion,
divided into discussions of temples and sacred architecture, priesthoods, rituals, the Roman calendar before and after Caesar, and Circuses and Games. The section on priesthoods is by far the longest, perhaps because they are mentioned so much in Roman Law, and covers all the major aspects of civic religion in considerable detail. However, the lectures overall are remarkably resistant to the idea of change over time; the section on priesthood is drawn largely from Cicero, as any work on Roman religion is bound to be, yet that on circuses focuses on the far better-known gladiatorial games of the high Empire two centuries later. Although Mackie acknowledges that the spectacular size and scale of the Colosseum represented an innovation and a move away from the sacred character of the older games, the gradual evolution of Roman religion is largely elided, perhaps in order to reduce either the length or complexity of a course which was intended to be taken alongside others. The practice of cults of the Emperor is little mentioned, despite the first offering of cult to a Roman leader occurring in the 2nd century BC and the practice being much criticised by early Christians.  

Even that part of the course is couched in very neutral, descriptive tones; there is no moral judgement of the merits or demerits of the state cults as theologies or even as instruments of government, merely a laying-out of what they were in a vaguely-defined period from perhaps the beginning of the 1st century BC to the end of the 1st century AD. This scrupulously neutral tone is in keeping with Mackie's thoughts on the study of history in general, set out in the lecture discussed earlier.

Mackie's course would have continued to discuss, probably at similar length to give a total course of 100,000 words or about 10 weeks' daily lectures, first Roman civil society then the military. The general outline of his course may be seen in that of John Hill in 1801-2, the manuscript of which has 'Mackie' scribbled on the flyleaf in pencil, where possibly some previous cataloguer had mistaken it for more of Mackie's lectures. This course continued in exactly the fashion described, though it was considerably shorter. Hill was Professor of Humanity and had apparently adopted the Antiquities course previously taught by the Professor of History, thus bringing Roman Antiquities and Latin together as was the case elsewhere (see Ch.7 below).

Only one other Professor of History is known to have been active at Edinburgh before the Scottish Universities Act of 1854; Alexander Fraser Tytler, later Lord Woodhouselee, who

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47 EUL MS Dc.8.141
held the Chair from 1780 to 1800; from 1780-6 jointly with John Pringle. There is no evidence of lectures occurring from before Mackie's retirement until 1780; the evidence to the Commission of Visitation states that no Professor other than Tytler ever gave regular lectures, DB Horn in his unpublished notes towards a history of Edinburgh University states that 'lectures had ceased by the early 1760s', and a 1779 history of Edinburgh notes that at the time of writing 'the Professor [of Civil History] gives no lecture.'

Tytler gave only a course of Universal History in 123 lectures, likely every weekday throughout the session, of which a very short synopsis was published in 1783 and a two-volume digest in 1801.

Tytler was explicit about the purpose of his course; history was a vehicle to 'understanding the science of Politics' which was the bounden duty of any man with an active part in his country's constitution, including any voter. History 'furnished incomparable proofs by which we may verify all the precepts of morality and prudence' but was 'more than any other [subject] liable to perversion from its proper use' by unscrupulous and dishonest historians.

For this reason, it could not merely be read by the unlearned in their own time and according to their own interest; young and untutored men would be liable to accept the perversion of the truth by those unscrupulous authors. Rather, it had to be taught, with particular attention to the causes of national grandeur and decline which could be found in 'the manners of nations, their laws, the nature of their governments, their religion, their intellectual improvements and the progress of their arts and sciences.'

In order to achieve this, Tytler rejected the two approaches employed by his predecessors. A strict chronological approach would lose sight of the aims he had just outlined, whilst 'a series of disquisitions on the various heads or titles of law and the doctrines of politics, illustrated by examples' as might be seen in a course of Antiquities, moral philosophy or political economy, could not show the operation of cause and effect. Tytler therefore adopted a very loosely chronological approach. Although compared to Mackie a far greater proportion of Tytler's course deals with modern history. Tytler drew several of his main case studies of political development and law from the ancient world and, again unlike Mackie, particularly from Rome.

Tytler was notably critical of classical democracy. As well as making the commonplace assertion that all societies are on a path to eventual corruption and decline, he wrote that 'All

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48 Horn papers, EUL MS Gen 1824 Box 1; H.Arnot, *The History of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh 1779) p.400
49 A.F.Tytler, *Plan and outlines of a course of Lectures on Universal History, ancient and modern, given in the University of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1782) p.5
50 Ibid. p.11
government is essentially of the nature of a monarchy'. This was not always a pure monarchy, but a pure aristocracy or democracy could not exist due to the necessity of having an executive (and thus monarchical) power, and the purest that had existed, Athens, had in fact been ridden with corruption and stood largely upon the backs of numerous disenfranchised and slaves. Once elected, any representative government was effectively a monarchy until the next elections, otherwise it would dissolve into chaos.\footnote{A.F.Tytler, \textit{Universal History – From the Creation of the World to the Beginning of the 18th Century}. (2vols, London 1801) i 217} This discussion is found in one place in §6 of the published \textit{Universal History}, but in the lecture outlines discussion of Athens' corruption and decline is split across Lectures VII, XI, XVII and XX; perhaps the strength of Tytler's views on democracy evolved over the course of the French Revolution as we have seen William Mitford's did.\footnote{See above, ch.3}

Like Mackie, Tytler has an extremely critical attitude toward the principal ancient historians (especially Livy) but he keeps a much closer focus on Roman politics; 31 successive lectures are devoted entirely to Rome from the Foundation to Constantine, and the emphasis is almost entirely on political history whilst the Church is barely mentioned, although four lectures covering the period from Constantine to Justinian include the spread of Popery as the Church became more firmly established. The criticism of sources is particularly found in Lecture XXII where the first decade of Livy is adjudged to be largely false or, at best, seriously exaggerated in all its details.\footnote{Tytler \textit{Lectures on Universal History} p.44}

Unsurprisingly, Tytler attributes most of Rome's troubles to a moral decline caused by the spread of luxury and excessive wealth; rich aristocrats wanted to get richer and to make their 'temporary monarchies' more permanent rather than risk expropriation by their greedy successors; from this followed a general decline of patriotic feeling and a willingness to let the early and efficient tyrants get on with ruling. Caesar might have rebuilt the system had he lived – he is described as performing 'acts of clemency and magnificence, salutary laws and splendid projects' whereas Augustus, if effective, is portrayed as a cold-hearted, power-hungry despot.\footnote{It may or may not say something for the national character of the Scots that Tytler's 'hero' of the Late Republic is not the urbane orator Cicero but the frugal, harsh, unbending, righteous and self-righteous Cato.} Equally unsurprisingly, given his views on democracy, Tytler presents the civil wars as partially a result of these unscrupulous oligarchs resorting to demagoguery and the whipping up of mob violence, which the aristocratic government of an earlier age had not needed.
The survival of Mackie's personal papers means that we also know of several 'extra' lectures he gave, though not the context in which they appeared. There is a whole short course, in Latin, on the history and electoral law of the Holy Roman Empire, dated 1741, pretty clearly produced in response to the War of the Austrian Succession – it was not advertised in the *Scots Magazine* in August of that year so may well have been given for the only time the preceding spring.\(^5\) There is also the text of a long lecture, or very short series, on local antiquities, in particular Hadrian's Wall, which is expressly based on literary sources, antiquarian works and personal observations. It ends with a crowd-pleasing encomium on the independence and fortitude of the Scots, who alone among Rome's neighbours rated such an impressive defensive structure. Mackie also overestimates the strength of the Wall's garrison at 20,000, in what must have been a fit of patriotic fervour.\(^5\) Here as in the course on universal history Mackie was not above mining the ancient world for sources of Scottish national pride, mitigating the lack of scholarly, reliable histories of Scotland itself before around the 11\(^{th}\) century. It is quite possible that other Professors of History supplemented their income by giving such lectures publicly and charging admission; if Hugh Blair and Adam Smith could support themselves teaching literature it is not at all inconceivable that historians could have done likewise, though none attained the same celebrity.

In comparison to these two lecturers, the other history professors in Scotland seem a rather feeble lot. None of the three who intervened between Mackie and Tytler at Edinburgh left any record of their lecturing. Tytler was succeeded by his 23-year-old son, of whom the most that Principal Baird would say to the Commissioners of Visitation in defence of the Chair was that the situation was not as bad as it appeared; although the class-lists had all been mislaid, there had not been very many years in which no attempt was made at all to lecture, though audiences had always been small.\(^5\) Small audiences were common even to the two major Professors.

Uniquely, a list of Mackie's students survives, an alphabetical list which purports to be every student he taught from 1719-46 and some additions for the last seven years of his professorship. There are around 600 names, so roughly 25 new names each year; a few are recorded as having come more than once, and they are about evenly split between 'History'
and 'Antiquities' with about 1/3 to 2/5 attending both either in the same or successive years.\textsuperscript{58} We may thus estimate that each of Mackie's lectures typically drew an audience in at least the high teens; not bad for a course which was not compulsory. Francis Jeffries estimated in his submission to the Visitation Commissioners that in his student days Alexander Tytler had drawn around 30, albeit in a vastly bigger institution; proportionally, despite this increase, there had been no real increase in enthusiasm for history, especially as Mackie's list represents a minimum, whereas Jeffries was defending the University against criticism of the utility of its minor chairs.\textsuperscript{59} The increased study of the ancient world by Edinburgh students took place not in Civil History lectures, but in other settings – courses of antiquities and of moral philosophy, which are discussed in subsequent chapters.

Towards the end of his career, Mackie proposed the creation of a Chair specifically for Modern History, 'as my commission obliges me to teach chiefly ancient history & to go yearly through a course of Greek and Roman Antiquities.' The divide was not to be as it is today, at the end of the ancient world, but at the Reformation – the Modern Historian would cover only the last 200 years. The foundation of such a Chair 'as exists at the English Universities, would be useful and popular' and could be paid for by annexing estates forfeited in the '45, which dates the proposal to between 1746-50. The original of this document is lost, and it survives only in the Edinburgh University Library as a typescript prepared by DB Horn.\textsuperscript{60} The scheme did not prosper; when the 1827 Commission of Visitation discussed which Chairs were wanted the discussion around the Civil History professorship focused on abolishing or repurposing the existing one, not on establishing a second.

At St Andrews, the story is considerably briefer. The Chair of Civil History was created at the union of St Leonards and St Salvator's Colleges in 1747 largely to provide employment for the superfluous Professor of Humanity when the colleges' staffs were combined.\textsuperscript{61} The lucky candidate drew a comparatively munificent salary, which by 1827 was £199, though probably considerably less at the time of the union. There are few records of any lectures being held; in common with the other Professors the historian was obliged to lecture if 10 students presented themselves, which had then not happened in ten years. The Chair is listed in the official Return as 'a sinecure' and the Commissioners proposed to replace it with one of

\textsuperscript{58} Edinburgh University Archives SR.7.13
\textsuperscript{59} Visitation Evidence i 398
\textsuperscript{60} EUL MS Gen 1824 Box 6, which refers to an original 'In the EU Archive Papers Relating to the Chair of Civil History', where it is no longer to be found, much of that archive having been rearranged in the 1980s.
\textsuperscript{61} R.G.Cant, Short History of St Andrews University (2nd Ed. St Andrews 1970) p.91
Natural History, in which a lecturer had managed to support himself by fees for several years, presumably indicating more student interest, or a Lectureship in Modern Languages.\textsuperscript{62} Professor Ferrie, noting that his two predecessors had occasionally managed to attract an audience in particular years, though never a large one, proposed that he lecture after the manner of George Miller at Dublin, giving free monthly or fortnightly lectures on particular periods rather than a full 'general history' course.\textsuperscript{63} Other professors suggested that it ought to focus on 'the philosophy of history' in order to attract more student interest, and that Ferrie should be compelled to lecture whenever any students at all appeared.\textsuperscript{64} The title was eventually modified in 1854 to 'Civil and Natural History' just six years before the same combination was abolished at Aberdeen, and was effectively a Natural History chair from then until 'Civil History' was dropped from the title in 1897. As there is so little evidence of any lectures at all, it is difficult to say what part ancient history specifically played in the life of this Chair; the fact that it was hived off from a Humanity professorship suggests an ancient history focus such as Mackie complained of was contemplated.

Meanwhile the situation at Marischal College, Aberdeen, was rather different from 1754 until the late eighteenth century. When the college authorities adopted a professorial system of teaching, they also took the opportunity to alter the curriculum; Logic and Metaphysics were de-emphasised, and the second year in the standard curriculum which they had previously occupied was filled with natural history as a preliminary to natural philosophy, and civil history as a preliminary to moral philosophy. As Marischal had a very small staff, both were to be taught by one professor, occupying roughly half the year each.\textsuperscript{65}

Unlike Edinburgh and Glasgow, most of the students at Marischal and King's Colleges seem to have followed the regular four-year curriculum, or at least as much of it as they could afford; until late in the eighteenth century, there were no previous examinations necessary for their advancement, and over half the student body was made up of Bursars (scholarship students) who were required to do so to retain their meagre emoluments, so there was a captive audience for the course of Civil and Natural History.\textsuperscript{66} Thomas Gordon the elder, Regent at King's in the 1740s, offered a range of additional subjects to students who would board in his house, advertising 'history, chronology, geography, heraldry and the principles of

\textsuperscript{62} Visitation Evidence iii 8; iii 153-63; iv 'Report of the Visitors' p.45
\textsuperscript{63} Visitation Evidence, iii 32
\textsuperscript{64} Visitation Evidence iii 156
\textsuperscript{65} Marischal College Senate Minutes, Aberdeen University Library MS M41, 11\textsuperscript{th} January 1753
\textsuperscript{66} McLaren Aberdeen Students p.85
architecture ... other useful and improving knowledge at all hours'. This rare insight into private tutoring arrangements in a Scottish university suggests Gordon thought the kind of wealthy young students who would take up such an arrangement would particularly benefit from studying history and its supporting subjects.

The formal history course was, to say the least, hurried. Meeting four days a week, all of Civil History was disposed of between the first week in November and the middle of January, leaving slightly more than half the very short Aberdeen academic year for Natural History; Mathematics was taught separately. When William Knight served as substitute Professor in 1810 his course outline was as follows:

1 week: Poetry and Versification
2 weeks: Chronology, Geography and Discovery
1 week: Introduction to General History
2 weeks: On Government and the British Constitution
2 weeks: History of the Ancient Nations including Egypt and Greece
1 week: Literature, Eloquence, Fine Arts, Philosophy & Religion of the Greeks
1 week: Rome from its Origins to Belisarius, its Literature and Antiquities.

This course thus covers some of the 'supporting' disciplines of history in the first three weeks, reflecting the continuing convention that history was both a literary endeavour and one requiring precise factual information. Its division between British and ancient history, eschewing 'general' modern history, tells us something about what was thought most absolutely indispensable, especially as Knight also had a whole albeit equally compressed set of Roman Antiquities lectures as well, discussed on the following page. Between those two courses, the history to be taught was overwhelmingly ancient.

The remaining ten to twelve weeks of the academic year were devoted to Natural History, including Chemistry, Geology, Botany, Zoology and Anatomy. By the 1820s, when the Commissioners of Visitation were taking evidence, the Civil History series was further reduced to just eight weeks, and Dr James Davidson, who was the permanent appointee after Knight's year of substitution, described the structure of his course, which he said he inherited from his predecessor and had not modified, as follows.

To introduce a view of the origins of society as far as we can trace it, then to go on with the different states that have existed ... the causes of the rise of

68 Knight Diaries, AUL MS M404/15
these states and the fall of them, the different kinds of laws they had; and to go through the early states – the Egyptians, Phoenicians and all those varieties, til I terminate with the Grecian States. After having gone through the Grecian States and given an account of Persia, I endeavour to illustrate by their history many facts in modern times, comparing one with the other.  

There are two interesting elements here. First, there is the justification of the study of history which the reform implies; this most ancient material will aid students in understanding modern society. Second, the distant antiquity of the material is unusual, terminating rather than beginning with Classical Greece. Presumably Davidson covered Rome separately in the Humanity course; teaching it was among the many duties which fell on the Professor of Civil and Natural History until the establishment of a separate post in 1839.

Knight also wrote a course of Roman Antiquities lectures for the same 1810-11 session. Entitled Lectures on Roman History and Antiquities, it is really more history than antiquities, and counters some of the limitations of the very short Civil History course. It was presumably part of the Humanity course and occupies 250 handwritten pages, with no marked lecture breaks, although in some places the breaks are clear and suggest a total of about 12-15 lectures, perhaps the last three or four weeks of the session. The majority of the course deals with the fall of the Roman Republic from 150-30 BC, beginning, 'the manner in which the Roman State was altered to be a despotism is of all parts of history the most instructive' due to the scale of events and the stature of those involved, showing 'the slow sure action of moral causes on nations as well as individuals.'

Knight has a clear moral purpose, which is to show the degenerative effects of luxury on the populace, who became shiftless and obsessed with frivolous amusements, and especially the upper classes. In Rome's glory days, war served the interests of every sector of society – the consuls got near-royal honours and their names became quasi-immortal, the Senate distracted the plebs from interfering in domestic government with foreign adventures, and the plebs came home with loot and land.

The decline, says Knight, began with the increasingly unjust pretexts of ever-more-profitable wars, and every war made the elite more out of touch with the people by their increasing

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69 Visitation Evidence iv 85
71 AUL MS404/16
72 Ibid. p.75
wealth from war loot, and thus their increased control over the land. This is similar to the 'enlightened narrative' of republican decline related by Ferguson and explained by Pocock (see introduction, ch.3), though Knight is much more sympathetic to the democratic element in Rome's constitution than Ferguson, arguing that at its height the Republic was 'essentially democratic' and that the Gracchi were morally in the right, although practically decades too late to achieve anything.\textsuperscript{73} Another interesting divergence from the 'enlightened narrative' is Knight's treatment of religion; Knight devotes a few minutes to mocking the Roman civic religion as, at best, aristocratic priestcraft, whereas Epicureanism is equated with atheism and the destruction of public fidelity.\textsuperscript{74} A full lecture is devoted to an admiring biographical sketch of Cicero and another to the Triumvirs, but before that there is very little in the way of biographical material.

Knight makes his purpose clear at the start of the last lecture - to contrast the causes of Roman decline with the dangers facing Britain. He sees three causes for optimism that luxury need not have the same deleterious effects in the nineteenth century as in the first. First, that Britain is to some extent a federal state; Edinburgh and Dublin can act as a counterweight to the concentration of all wealth and power in London. Second, representative democracy will prevent the governing class being totally indifferent to the condition of the sort of yeomen who were the backbone of Republican Rome. Third, the British are prepared to accept that the Constitution may from time to time evolve, as Cicero and his ilk were not.\textsuperscript{75} None of these conclusions is unquestionable, and the acceptance that constitutional change is desirable as well as inevitable would have found vocal opposition from many, but clearly Knight thought the Roman political example would be more useful to his students than an Antiquities-focused course. Knight's basic optimism about the British constitution conceals the fact that his reading of it is not uncontroversial – it was by no means certain that Britain accepted the necessity of periodic constitutional change, or that Parliament ought to be all that responsive to the concerns of the yeomanry.

The rationale behind Marischal's 1753 scheme of reform appears to have been that, as natural history and mathematics provided a basis of necessary factual knowledge for natural philosophy, so did civil history, especially ancient history, for moral and political studies. This is an interesting claim for a subject which effectively replaced much of the Logic course, for

\textsuperscript{73} Ibid. p.171
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid. pp.140-5, 179
\textsuperscript{75} Ibid. pp.243-5.
which similar claims were made in the reforms of the 1690s. At a time when Adam Smith was already starting to articulate an alternative way of conceptualising political relationships as a primarily economic problem, Marischal's focus on a sound historical basis for its moral philosophy might be connected to its association with 'Common Sense' philosophy; applying rules of evidence to the philosophy of mind, as historical evidence was used as a foundation to the philosophy of society. History as the factual foundation of moral philosophy appears in several Scottish moral philosophy lectures (see below ch.9), but Marischal appears to have been alone in creating a class specifically to provide such a foundation. The Civil History course that could actually be packed into the time available was perhaps not entirely successful in meeting that need, but Knight's course structure makes a solid attempt, devoting an appreciable portion of the time to teaching students how to study history in their own time, focusing on the importance of chronology, geography, 'discovery', and general history, and much of the rest to the study of the vital cultural and political institutions of ancient as well as British society.

Beyond Marischal's unique case, the comparative unpopularity of the history lectures, and the mixed bag of candidates for the Chairs, requires explanation, and several may be offered. The principal, that offered by the Visitors then returned to by Horn in both his published and unpublished work, is that the History Chair at Edinburgh (still more so at St Andrews) was uniquely isolated from the curriculum. Unlike Philosophy, Humanity and Greek it was not required for study in Divinity; unlike Mathematics and what we would now term the sciences it was not of obvious use to the medical students who increasingly dominated the total student numbers, and whilst the Faculty of Advocates as patrons of the Edinburgh Chair and users of the Civil Law found it useful, the Roman Antiquities lectures of the later Professors of Humanity seem to have sufficed for their needs in ancient history. As it was largely ancient history (or current affairs) that was drawn upon for case studies by moral philosophy classes, the rationale for either the ancient or modern elements of a distinct history course was not always evident. Dr William Ferrie, the holder of St Andrews' Civil History sinecure at the time of the 1826 Visitation, suggested that Civil History be made a requirement for entry to Divinity Hall, as it would otherwise never attract a paying audience.

78 Visitation Evidence, iii 30
The patrons of the Chairs have also been criticised; the Faculty of Advocates were entitled from 1722 to present the Edinburgh Town Council with a short-list of two names, and always seem to have selected from among their members - not a particularly large talent pool. Meanwhile the Chair at St Andrews was in the gift of the Earls of Cassilis. However, the Edinburgh Anatomy Chair was no more capably filled by the time it descended to the third generation of Alexanders Munro, yet it continued to attract the largest audience of any university-level lecture in the British Isles. The Advocates can also hardly be blamed for the longevity of some of the Professors, who outlived their ability and inclination to discharge their posts.

Furthermore, the classes were always fee-paying; the Arts Professors were expected to issue 'gratis tickets' to poor students who were following the full curriculum with the aim of studying Divinity, but there was no such provision for history, which may have led to a vicious cycle: the classes were too small for the Professor to be willing to give up any of his income from fees, so poor students were put off, so the class remained small, and so on.

The perceived merits of ancient history as a study might also have been a problem later in the period, as it was seen at Marischal Aberdeen and by several prominent professors of moral philosophy as a preliminary to more abstract studies. Sir James Mackintosh in his memoirs pointed to two in particular. First, despite the warnings of Tytler and Mackie, history whether ancient and modern was still often considered a suitable subject for the autodidact – Mackintosh had taught himself the histories of Rome and Byzantium, and developed an interest in the history of philosophy, quite independently of his university studies, remarking that 'our academical education left very few traces on my mind' compared to intellectual history. Anyone who tried to defend the place of ancient history in the academy had to address this criticism, which may be found throughout this thesis – for example, in the worries of William Scott that lecturing was an outmoded means of teaching history when students could buy books cheaply.

Knox, Walker, Copleston, and a host of others offered their responses, but not entirely persuasively. The very definition of history in its nineteenth-century sense, as an investigation into 'what happened', was not yet secure, and older definitions of history less clearly required 'teaching'. Second, history did not sit well with what Mackintosh thought was the prevailing

80 See above, p.83
intellectual spirit of the Scottish University; it required in his view 'very various and exact learning' whereas at Aberdeen and Edinburgh:

'Accurate and applicable knowledge were deserted for speculations not susceptible of certainty, nor of any immediate reference to the purposes of life ... youth... was often wasted in vast and fruitless projects. Speculators could not remain submissive learners. Those who will learn must for a time trust their teachers and believe in their superiority. But they who too early think for themselves must sometimes think themselves wiser than their master ... it is vain to deny the reality of these inconveniences and of other most serious dangers to the individual and to the community from a speculative tendency ... too early impressed on the minds of youth.'

Mackintosh's concern is clearly relevant to the unpopularity of studying history as such, ancient or modern. Whereas philosophy, especially moral philosophy, offered grand and sweeping theories of humanity as a whole, developing similar ideas from the study of history directly required wading through detail and comparing accounts of different societies, both ancient and modern. Students of a 'speculative tendency' would not be patient with being taught history, though they might read it – the process of teaching would probably require too much in the way of imposing particular interpretations on the student by the teacher, unless the teacher were to adopt Smyth's approach at Cambridge and introduce students to the depth of scholarly controversy and the best authors to trust on particular topics – which we might expect Mackintosh to have enjoyed and approved had he studied elsewhere or been aware of Smyth's lectures, which were not published until after Mackintosh's death.

As will become clear in the chapter on Moral Philosophy and Political Economy, there were other challenges to the utility of ancient history and to the academic merits of history arising by the end of the eighteenth century, whether they came in the form of 'conjectural history' so rarefied it discarded all reference to the actual past, or of claims that history was obsolete, the ancient world irrelevant in its primitivity, and the white heat of technology would melt the outdated lessons of the past into slag. The latter critique was particularly relevant to ancient history; a major part of Dugald Stewart's critique of over-reliance on ancient history for political examples was that society was qualitatively different to what it had been in the ancient world so comparisons between Britain and Greece or Rome were irrelevant, even dangerous.

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81 Ibid. p.29
Chapter 7 - Humanity

As has already been mentioned, the Humanity, or Latin, course taken early in a student's university career might well include a series of lectures on Roman Antiquities. Charles Mackie at Edinburgh took these as part of the History Professor's duties, but we find antiquities lectures later being given by the Humanity Professor, so this cannot have been universal practice. Elsewhere, they seem to have been always part of the Humanity course, where they occurred at all. There are very few examples of Greek antiquities being taught separately to the main Greek class, which we know focused largely if not exclusively on grammar – a necessity in a society where the vast majority of new students would not have been formally taught Greek before.

At Marischal College Aberdeen, where the standard of Latin among the new students was notoriously low and there was a Civil History course in the second year, there may have been no separate 'Antiquities' at all until late in the period – the Commissioners of Visitation heard in 1827 that the Second Humanity class was a relatively recent innovation, and the course of Roman Antiquities by Knight discussed in the previous chapter, which was perhaps a predecessor, is mentioned nowhere in the Minutes of Senate when the curriculum is discussed. By the time of the Visitation the Humanity Lecturer was a part-time and unsalaried post, borrowed from the Grammar School.\(^8^2\) This could hardly have helped a situation where, relative to the Anglican universities, the standard of Latin was low across Scotland due to the youth of the students. The average age of matriculation across Scotland in the 1800s was 14 or 15, and it does not seem to have altered much over the preceding century.\(^8^3\) This meant Scottish matriculands had on average, had two to four years' less schooling than their opposite numbers elsewhere, although the best Scottish grammar schools were at least equal in standard to their English counterparts.

King's Aberdeen, however, did at least for a time have a course on Greek antiquities, which the other universities do not appear to have had consistently.\(^8^4\) Greek classes were expected to teach the language from scratch, and thus generally had no time for more than grammar and a

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82 Visitation Evidence iv 74
83 Ibid. ii 38
84 Visitation Evidence iv 84 explicitly states Marischal has “never” taught Greek Antiquities; i 93 that the Greek studied at Edinburgh is “largely elementary” and that the higher classes read only one book of Thucydides and “extracts of Herodotus” among the historians because their Greek is too poor to proceed quickly – though, conversely, Arnot, History of Edinburgh p.406 says that Prof. Dalziel in 1779 gives twice-weekly lectures on Greek history and antiquities. Perhaps the continued growth of student numbers left his successors with no time to do so.
little literature, but Thomas Blackwell the Younger lectured regularly 'on the Greek society' and 'on history geography and chronology' when Professor of Greek and Principal.\textsuperscript{85} Lord Deskford in his inauguration speech as Chancellor in 1765 recommended that the Regent of Humanity ought to lecture in the manner of Hugh Blair at Edinburgh, on antiquities and history both political and natural, and likewise upon criticism and rhetoric (the latter two being Blair's main subject matter), but there is little evidence of this being put into practice.\textsuperscript{86}

The Humanity class at King's, which presumably became fixed with the final abolition of regenting in 1799, had a first class which dealt only with language, again suggesting a low initial level of Latin, but the second class read principally historians – extracts from Tacitus, Suetonius and Cicero – and its major aims were, according to Professor Rev. Patrick Forbes, to introduce students to ancient oratory and philosophy, to cover the beginnings of modern history via Tacitus' \textit{Germania}, and to acquaint students with 'Roman antiquities and customs'.\textsuperscript{87} The use of \textit{Germania} to introduce aspects of modern history echoes the similar approach taken by Bennet at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, in the 1780s.

Mackie's course structure discussed earlier seems to have been fairly typical, or at least widely adopted. A complete set of lecture notes from John Hill, Professor of Humanity from 1775-1805, survives in Edinburgh University Library and follows Mackie's scheme exactly (as mentioned above); it shows how the course continued after that part of Mackie which survives, going on to cover, after religion, 'Civil' and 'Military' institutions, then finally 'Res Variae' for everything not fitting those categories.

As appeared with Mackie's course (but much more so), the survey is not specific to a particular time period. The account given of a Roman Legion is of the 'Polybian' type as to structure and command, dating from the late 3\textsuperscript{rd} century BC and lifted wholesale from Book VI of Polybius. However, the account of recruitment, pay, conditions and equipment in the following paragraphs is several generations later, certainly Civil War era if not Imperial, based probably on Caesar and Vegetius, and ignoring the contradictions between the two arising from the evolution of the Roman Army over several centuries.\textsuperscript{88} This sort of disconnect is perhaps an inevitable consequence of trying to give a thematic rather than chronological overview, and it is unclear whether Hill was genuinely unfamiliar with the

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\textsuperscript{85} AUL MS K43 f.373r (King's College Aberdeen Minute Book) and A.Bower, \textit{Life of James Beattie LL.D} (London 1804) p.24
\textsuperscript{86} Quoted in Wood, \textit{The Aberdeen Enlightenment} p.156
\textsuperscript{87} Visitation Evidence iv.12
\textsuperscript{88} Hill, \textit{Lectures}, EUL MS Dc.8.141 §3
\end{flushleft}
difference, trying to be concise, or simply did not expect his students to care. It is also possible that the student who took down the lecture-notes in question omitted passages of what he considered irrelevant detail.

The civil institutions are more clearly located in time, being drawn heavily from Cicero, but even more confused in detail. Possibly due to the notes being intended merely as aides-memoires, or to misunderstandings by the student taking the notes, parts are inaccurate and others incomprehensible. For example, there is a long passage comparing the functions of a consilium plebis with a Select Committee of the House of Commons, when it was in fact a legislative assembly, although until 339 BC its resolutions had to be approved by the Senate, and for a further 60 years it needed senatorial permission to debate any particular topic. 89

The general tenor of the lectures is extremely admiring of Roman institutions, ending with the statement that 'a more perfect system of Government than that of Rome can scarce be imagined' - perhaps rather later in time than we might expect such an assertion, though it is modified by criticism of the 'wholly military' spirit of Roman society. 90 The account is at every turn closely compared with the British constitution, so as well as providing a factual summary of Roman government under the late Republic, the British system is invested with some of the aura of Roman glory.

The final section of the course's 'res variae' are indeed varied, covering topics including marriage, slavery, funeral customs, the authority of fathers, the gradual spread of citizenship, food, drink, including with a random assertion that men under 30 were forbidden to drink wine, money (again rather confused in time) and naming conventions. One can certainly see the logic of the res variae section if attendance at Antiquity lectures was still required of prospective lawyers; all of these topics save the food and drink loom large in Roman Law.

Hill's introductory lecture says it will be the first of three topics addressed by the class, which was probably the Second Humanity Class, followed by 'the Rules of Composition [of Latin] and the Principles of Universal Grammar which directed it in common with all other languages whatever.' Hill also gives a definition and defence of the study of Roman Antiquity:

89 Ibid. §2, contrast F.F.Abbott, History and Description of Roman Political Institutions (New Haven, 1991) p.50
90 Hill, Lectures EUL MS Dc.8.141 §2
Between the History and the Antiquities of Nations there is a real	hough not obvious distinction. They agree in this that both of them
preserve the Memory of facts. But the Historian relates facts in the
order in which they happened, while the Antiquary attends to only one
fact at once. The Historian aims at eloquence in his accounts, the
Antiquarian studies accuracy. The Antiquary attends to the
authenticity of those single facts which the Historian states in detail.
The former, jealous of the truth of what is affirmed, is ever ready to
support or confute it, and is regarded by the latter as his most
formidable critic, for the Antiquary finds employment in reviewing
the History of past ages. Prejudices have arisen against the study of
Antiquities, from a misapprehension of the study itself … they furnish
us with a view of the Elements of General Philosophy; they accustom
the mind to accurate research.\(^91\)

Hill's definitions are not controversial, but his defence of Antiquities as a check on the
accuracy of history is interesting given that his students might well have been simultaneously
attending Tytler's sketchy lectures on Universal History. Accurate research is something
Mackintosh despairs of getting Scottish students of that generation to pay attention to. The
justification of antiquities as giving a route into general philosophy situates these complex
and rather dense lectures in the overall university curriculum, offering a self-interested
justification as to why students should keep coming and paying attention. If it was, as seems
likely from its relatively sophisticated nature, the Second Humanity class, it was not
necessarily a Divinity Hall requirement that students attend it, so advertising the lectures'
utility in the wider curriculum was one way to keep up attendance, and thus fees.

Mackie's structure is also preserved in another set of what appear to be lecture notes, headed
'Antiquitatum Romanorum breve Compendium, inceptum AD nostri 1760, 1 March.'\(^92\) The
'inceptum' suggests perhaps the beginning of a short course of lectures, and the notes in Latin
cover much the same ground as Hill's lectures. The notes are in Glasgow's Murray Collection,
but contain nothing to indicate their origin. 1760 seems late for lectures to be delivered in
Latin, but not implausibly so, particularly as part of a Humanity course where the Latin
would serve as extra language practice. Thomas Warton gave his inaugural lecture at Oxford
in Latin as late as 1785, and examinations at all the Anglican universities were conducted in
Latin well into the nineteenth century.

Antiquities courses could of course take other forms. The Murray Collection at Glasgow

\(^91\) Hill, Lectures EUL MS Dc.8.141 f.3r
\(^92\) GUL MS Murray 148
University has what looks like two sets of notes from a very similar course, produced by the brothers William and John Boyle, who the catalogue notes were at Edinburgh University around 1710. Titled 'heads of History and Antiquity' these fragmentary notes in Latin, mixed up with themes, Latin grammar exercises and bits of philosophy notes, cover early Roman history, with connections to biblical chronology, from the foundation of the city to the Second Punic War. As Edinburgh did not yet possess any History chair, but had acquired an official and fully curricular Humanity class in 1708, these notes are probably from that class.\(^93\) John Hunter at St Andrews, who served as Professor of Humanity for over 50 years from 1775, did not give antiquities lectures, but 'sometimes a point of Roman Antiquities was prescribed on which [students] were to inform themselves, and if anything occurred having a reference to Roman Antiquities I was in use to examine them upon it.'\(^94\) James Pillans of Edinburgh described his senior Humanity class in the early 1820s in similar terms; he 'examined them in their private reading' of Livy and 'Dr Adams' Roman Antiquities'.\(^95\) Pillans also draws attention to the fact that this class reads a full pentad of Livy, rather than extracts, so as to make it possible to follow the course of historical events – he notes that this is not the usual practice in Humanity classes.\(^96\)

Slightly after the end of this period, we have a more complete set of lectures by the long-serving Professor Walker given to the Humanity class of 1827 'according to the usual form.'\(^97\) This covers 33 lectures, slightly over one per week of the Glasgow academic year, but about right for two a week after the Christmas break. These are an interesting fusion of the chronological and systematic. They are built around a core of nine lectures giving a straightforward chronological account of Roman republican history (nos. 6-14), but the remainder consist of a more antiquarian account. At the beginning of the surviving course no. 3 (the first two are missing) covers 'the defects and excellencies of Sallust', nos. 4-5 are an argument for classical education, and the beginning of no. 6 summarises the main Roman historians. In the second half, there are four lectures on 'the Republican policy of Rome', seven on military affairs, five on religion and biographies of Cicero, Livy, Ovid and Tacitus.

The fact that Walker had to build in a defence of classical education is interesting; Glasgow more than any other university had an aggressively utilitarian outlook and this defence is very

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\(^{93}\) GUL MSS Murray 189 and 304
\(^{94}\) Visitation Evidence iii.39
\(^{95}\) Visitation Evidence i.428
\(^{96}\) Visitation Evidence i.430
\(^{97}\) GUL MS Murray 410
much in that vein. There are six reasons given for a classical education: that it assists in understanding 'the universal principles of language', aids the metaphysician by allowing him to express concepts cleanly and precisely, improves understanding of modern languages, trains the mind in rigorous logical and poetic thinking, and Latin remains the lingua franca of scholarship.

Observant readers will have counted only five reasons. The sixth is Walker's contention that due to their developed language and political condition the ancients produced the greatest works on many subjects, especially history, and this is of unparalleled interest due to both the characters involved and the significance they continue to bear to today's societies. Even Christianity, he says, can be supported by reading the best pagan authors, as the reader will see how little good learning and civilisation can do a people without Revelation. This section ends by quoting Cicero, on how those ignorant of the past remain forever children.

Walker's defence of the continuing relevance of studying ancient history is interesting and useful, coming as it does in the midst of a utilitarian and practical summary of what is worthwhile in a classical education as part of a broader course of studies; it echoes the definition of a 'liberal education' presented by the likes of Knox and Turnbull as an education both useful and improving, but with more emphasis on the 'useful'. The contrast to Copleston's defence of Oxford's 'liberal education', as improving partly because unworldly, is clear, and reflects broader cultural divisions between English and Scottish universities. However, the course which emerges would not particularly surprise us as a series of tutorials by a conscientious English tutor, perhaps a Scott, despite these fundamentally different rationales. Both agree, in the face of trenchant criticism, that history has a place in the university.

The balance of biography, antiquities and narrative is clearly a conscious attempt to fulfil these functions of history-teaching (as distinct from classics in general) – demonstrations of character, understanding of Great Works, understanding the causes of the rise and fall of

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98 On the university's utilitarian approach to studies, see R.L. Emerson, 'The Glasgow Professors' in A. Hook and R.B. Sher (eds.) The Glasgow Enlightenment (East Linton 1995) pp. 28-9. This discussion is in GUL MS Murray 410 ff. 15-18 (Lecture IV)
99 Some of these points are similar to those expressed slightly earlier by James Beattie when Professor of Moral Philosophy at Aberdeen, though Beattie confines his defence of Latin more narrowly to learning the language rather than historical and cultural studies. J. Beattie, 'On the Utility of Classical Learning' in Essays: On Poetry and Music; on Laughter and Ludicrous Composition; and on the Utility of Classical Learning (Edinburgh 1778) pp. 487-530.
100 Cicero Orator 120; in trans. H.M. Hubbell & G.M. Hendrickson Brutus and Orator (Cambridge, MA 1962) p. 295
societies, and inculcating systematic thinking. The biographies address the importance of individual models of character, in addition to providing useful background to literary studies, the narrative demonstrates the limitations as well as the successes of the Roman constitution, and the antiquities demonstrate these in a systematic fashion as well as pointing up the similarities to and influences on nineteenth-century Scotland. As with other such courses, the aims are hampered by the sweeping ambition of the course and the limited time allocated, but this is a necessary corollary of the breadth of the Scottish university experience.

A final location where we might expect to find 'Antiquities' taught is in the Law faculty as a part of law. The Chair of Public and Natural Law at Edinburgh proved rather a disappointment, whilst the Civil Law there was a relatively narrow professional course with the teaching of Antiquities devolved to either the History or Humanity professors. However at Glasgow, the only other university which taught law effectively, John Millar, the long-service Professor of Civil Law (1761-1800), taught a 'class of Government' which combined in a broadly historical context elements of what might otherwise have fallen under Law, History and Moral Philosophy.

The Government class seems to have been a unique innovation of Millar's; it is recalled with admiration by Francis Jeffrey in his evidence to the Visitors 25 years after Millar's retirement, and Millar's successor but one says there has been no demand for any but Scots law since at least 1820. The lectures, which survive in two student copies in the Glasgow University Library, fall into three parts. These are, first, a general history of the early growth of society; second, a brief history of the political institutions of Greece and Rome; third, the same for the English constitution, offering an integration of classical with modern political and legal history. Millar begins with a brief preface, explaining how public law is a worthy subject of study, of greater interest than private due to its greater scope and influence on daily life, and the need to understand the ongoing evolution of the present constitution by comparison with other, similar constitutions.

One could achieve this simply by reading History, but for Millar this is unsatisfactory as:

101 Horn, *Short History of Edinburgh* pp.41,49
102 J.W.Cairns, 'Legal Education in Glasgow 1761-1801' in Hook & Sher (eds) *The Glasgow Enlightenment*
103 *Visitation Evidence* i 407 and ii 145
104 GUL MSS Gen. 289 and Hamilton 116; the latter is marginally longer but more fragmentary and disjointed, references are to the former.
Histories have more commonly been written for entertainment than for use, and contain chiefly a detail of such particulars as are calculated to please the imagination. They are a sort of Biography, in which the achievements of particular princes or great men are displayed, and in which every other circumstance is regarded as of a subordinate nature. By degrees, however, observations concerning customs, manners and laws, come to be more and more intermixed, by which the thread of the narrative was in some degree interrupted, and rendered as a mere story less interesting.  

What Millar says could be true of any history, but the societies he chooses to hold up for comparison to contemporary England are those of the ancient world “not only on account of their celebrity, or their connexion with ourselves, but as they illustrate different states of society.” Whereas other authors find in ancient history the origins or mirror of the present day, Millar uses Athens, Sparta and Rome as comparators precisely because they are both primitive and alien; truths which obtain in the ancient as well as the modern world may be claimed to be truly universal, yet the lecturer is not put to the trouble of introducing an entirely unfamiliar society.

The opening line is a clear argument for teaching, not merely reading, history to achieve the most useful effects as well as mere entertainment, echoing similar arguments by Smyth at Cambridge. The 'entertainment' of history was provided by the popular histories aimed at schoolboys, discussed in Chapter 2, full of incident and larger-than-life characters. Those moderns who have attempted to produce a more systematic history, he says, have tended to reduce it to 'a series of dissertations' and the larger themes become even harder to follow. Rather, his first part directly compares a number of ancient and modern states, including Athens, Sparta, Rome, France, and Britain. The key difference, he finds, is one of historical background. Whereas the ancient states grew from individual towns and retained political institutions suited to a single city, modern nations are built on the provincial structures of empire and have, from their beginnings, had to deal with extensive territories and poor communications.  

The inclusion of extended treatment of Athens and Sparta in their classical prime reflects the growth of interest in the 5th century BC over the eighteenth century, with the increased ability and desire to read Attic Greek bringing 'classical' Greece more into the mainstream of history teaching alongside Rome.

Another key differences is the number of 'leisured' citizens, those who have the time and

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105 GUL MS Gen. 289 f.5
106 Ibid. f.69
milieu to be 'polite and sociable', the concentration of which is the key factor in the
development of higher culture and a polite society. The development of the concept of the
'balance of power' is also held up as rendering peaceful coexistence between powerful states a
possibility; Millar does not discuss how just such a balance existed between Imperial Rome
and Parthia. Finally, Millar notes that modern technology has made the advantages of a
standing army in discipline, training and equipment outweigh any deleterious moral effects it
might have.\textsuperscript{107}

Millar thus sets out a theory of why classical studies are important to the constitutional
lawyer, and explicitly sets out to explain what has caused the differences between 'then' and
'now' without obviating the 'fundamental Principles' of government. These principles have
little to do with climate or remote ancestry. Millar treats Montesquieu on the influence of
geography particularly harshly, with an observation that the Romans had the same climate as
contemporary Italy, and were the ancestors of contemporary Italians, and yet totally different
national characters.\textsuperscript{108} Rather, these fundamental principles are verities of human social
organisation: that rulers should be close to their people, and citizen bodies kept small to
enable true participation. 'True representative government' is upheld as the ultimate
expression of this, but a monarchy might arrive at a reasonable facsimile by allowing its
provinces limited self-government under their own aristocrats or parliaments.\textsuperscript{109} In a way,
Millar's course stands in competition against the Moral Philosophy class, offering a more
legalistic and historical interpretation of politics, perhaps less useful to the future merchant
and civic dignitary, but more so to the lawyer needing a broader context for the cases he will
plead.

Ancient history in the form of 'antiquities' classes was widely taught in the second half of the
century. It was particularly associated with, and often required as, preparation for the civil
law, one of the main destinations of Scottish university students and one closely associated
with entry into political life. Several of the Scottish figures discussed in Part IV were
advocates, and can thus be expected to have studied Roman antiquities as part of their
training. Millar at Glasgow brought teaching of antiquities within the Faculty of Law, and
integrated it into an alternative way of teaching large-scale principles of government and
social organisation, sitting alongside the moral philosophy class. Teaching of Greek

\textsuperscript{107} Ibid. ff.147-60
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid. f.91
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid. f.217
antiquities, however, is known mainly from a handful of scattered reference, and may have been very rare in the Scottish universities, reflecting students' extremely poor standard of Greek as Greek classes had to spend almost all their time on the basics of grammar.
Chapter 8 - Ecclesiastical History

A further location for the teaching of history in the Scottish universities was the Divinity Halls, the post-graduate institutions where the elite ministers of the Kirk were, in theory, trained in all the theological skills necessary to spread the Word. Students in Divinity Halls were required to attend only 'occasionally' if they did so for an extra year, which could in practice mean as little as four days a year for around three years, though full-time students certainly did exist and made up perhaps a third of the total. All students had to deliver a number of 'discourses' or lectures before their professor. Although the combined Divinity Hall of the Aberdeen colleges had no separate Church Historian at all, it was clearly taught by someone; long-serving Principal of Marischal George Campbell had his Lectures on Ecclesiastical History published posthumously in 1796.

The Chairs were of earlier foundation than those of Civil History; Edinburgh's was authorised in 1694, though not filled for another eight years, St Andrews (specifically St Mary's College) in 1707, and Glasgow in 1716-21. At Glasgow the Professor of Ecclesiastical History was also, as we have seen, nominally Lecturer in Civil History and thus the qualifying adjectives were often omitted from his title; he was enjoined by the Visitation of 1727 to teach whenever five students appeared, and it is not specified what kind of history he was to teach them. Ecclesiastical history is not necessarily what we think of today as 'ancient history' and was considered largely as distinct from secular history. However, some commonalty was recognised by Glasgow's combined post, and much of the ecclesiastical history taught was set in the ancient world. The spread of Christianity, for example, could hardly be discussed in any detail without giving students a working knowledge of the otherwise neglected civil history of the late Roman empire. Ecclesiastical history thus represents one of the main ways in which Scottish students might have been exposed to the history of the ancient world.

These professorships carried healthy salaries; at St Andrews the Professor of Ecclesiastical History was by 1826 the highest-paid of all the academic staff at £286 a year. They also had,

110 Stuart, 'The History and Present State of Marischal College' p.23 explains the system of occasional attendance. See also Campbell, 'Carlyle and the University of Edinburgh' pp.61-3
111 G.Campbell, Lectures on Ecclesiastical History (New ed. London 1834)
112 Grant, Story of the University of Edinburgh ii 280, 306
113 St Andrews Muniments UYSM110/B19/P2/3
114 Visitation Evidence ii 277. The date given is accurate; the records of the Visitation of Glasgow in 1727 survive in part because they were submitted to the general Visitation of 1827.
in a sense, a captive audience, in that certificates of attendance at a Divinity Hall were required of prospective preachers by many, but not all, parishes. However, for most of the period, until 1801 at Glasgow, for example, and at St Andrews until 1858, the Ecclesiastical History lectures did not incur fees, unlike most classes in the philosophy curriculum. The estimates of total income, including fees, for the St Andrews philosophy staff were between £300-450 by 1827, and at the other universities could be much more. In the absence of a reliable income from fees, the Divinity chairs had to have relatively large salaries in order to attract high-flying preachers who could make a very solid living from wealthy urban parishes. Following Adam Smith, we might expect to find that this rendered the incumbents relatively indolent, but class lists going back to the 1780s in the Visitation Evidence suggest that lectures were usually scheduled, albeit with small classes registered, and presumably occurred.

The Visitation Evidence provides some idea of how the Ecclesiastical History course functioned. William McTurk at Glasgow, who had taught the class since 1797, explained that his course covered a total of three years, meeting twice a week for an hour each, and much occupied by hearing discourses rather than getting on with the lectures. The first year was spent on the Old Testament, including the history and antiquities of the Jews. The second covered the history of Christianity down to the Reformation, with a special focus on Scotland, and the third, the post-Reformation church. The equivalent at St Andrews, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Chalmers, adopted the unusual expedient of lecturing daily for two months each year, and took four to work through 'all the Christian history'. At Aberdeen, the Marischal Divinity Professor gave part of his lecture course on 'the principal controversies which have agitated the Church' in the fourth of the five sessions over which his course stretched – a length which meant almost no students would stay for the whole thing. Meiklejohn at Edinburgh taught five hours a week for three years, aiming to cover all of revealed religion from the Creation to 1688, but admitted he had never yet advanced past the seventh century AD! His predecessor Robert Cuming (or Cumming) covered merely 'the rise and progress of Christianity, the manner in which it blended itself with the different sects of philosophy … [and] spread itself over Europe, concluding with a state, historical and descriptive, of the different sects of Christians'.

116 *Visitation Evidence* i
117 *Visitation Evidence* iii 111
118 Stuart, 'The History and Present State of Marischal College' p.26
119 *Visitation Evidence* i 175
120 Arnot, *History of Edinburgh* p.397
John Stuart noted in 1798 that a proper Professorship of Church History was one of the foundations that would be needed to set a combined University of Aberdeen on a sound footing, along with Humanity, Belles Lettres and a proper medical school. Given that the same author estimated the number of Divinity students at no more than 60, and over 40 of those ‘occasional attenders’, the perceived draw of ecclesiastical history must have been considerable in his eyes.121 The Visitation Commission did not recommend a separate Chair be set up at Aberdeen, as the Divinity Hall was too small to justify more professors, but did recommend a common course structure across all the universities, and that a class should run over two years, so students could either attend both halves in the same year, or in successive years.122 The faculty responded that there was insufficient demand to have two classes in each session, and suggested that there should be just one, as most Divinity students attended for two years anyway.

Aberdeen's Church History lectures were given by the two colleges' general Divinity professors; Campbell refers to his lectures constituting 'the first part of the Theology course'. His course as published, of just 28 lectures, could have been given in a half-session of the three lectures a week that seem to have been the standard at the Aberdeen colleges, which allowed students to also attend lectures at the other college on alternate days. The main body of the course, following one on the sources of Jewish history and one on the apostles, focuses on a historical explanation of the evolution of authority in the Church, of episcopacy in general and the Papacy in particular. A lecture on the historical roots of episcopacy could hardly fail to cover to how the sees of the early Church were based on the civil administration of the Roman state; as the very term 'vicar' originally denoted a sub-provincial governor.123 Indeed, the identification of the civil hierarchy with ecclesiastical authority is criticised for encouraging the gradual accretion of power to bishops and Popes over the first six centuries AD.

Campbell, like William Smyth and Percy Scott, wrestled with the difficulty of distinguishing what could best be taught in class versus left to private reading, a particularly difficult question for prospective ministers who on the one hand needed to be well-read in theology and church history, but also needed to be taught to uphold Kirk doctrines. His introductory

121 J. Stuart, 'The History and Present State of Marischal College' p.38
122 Visitation Evidence iii 556
123 Campbell, Lectures on Ecclesiastical History esp. pp.164-70
lecture represents his attempt to square the circle. He argues that there are too many books of great importance to recommend all or even many to students who have many other calls on their time; the weight of reading would be a distraction and discouragement to students. Furthermore, books are expensive to a poor student (an important consideration at Aberdeen, where students were generally very poor). On top of these practical considerations, Campbell argues that the over-read man has little time to think about his reading. He concludes that whilst his lectures draw on a vast range of reading, it is preferable to recommend to students that they concentrate on a handful of truly excellent books. In this way the lecture, like Smyth's, serves as an introduction to further reading, but to a distilled shortlist rather than the expansive and open-ended recommendations of Smyth.  

However, the Commissioners of Visitation also heard from the Clerk to the General Assembly, Dr John Lee. Following his education at Edinburgh and a first stint as a parochial minister, he had just left the Rectorship of St Mary's, where he was Professor of Ecclesiastical History from 1812-20; he had also lectured in Moral Philosophy at King's College Aberdeen and was a future principal of the United College of St Andrews and of Edinburgh University. Lee gave a long deposition, focusing especially on the merits of ecclesiastical history. He began with a brief encomium of ancient history in general; it was essential to a preacher to know the context as well as the content of the Scriptures, and of the Church Fathers as well. The emphasis on patristics implies that Lee's preferred ancient history would go beyond the Classical period into late antiquity, which most 'ancient history' did not cover in any depth, save Smyth's long course at Cambridge which is discussed earlier, in Chapter 4.

Ecclesiastical history, however, was invested by Lee with 'all the advantages which are produced by the study of civil history, the utility of which to the moralist, lawyer and statesman is universally admitted' and a whole range of other advantages. Three of the seven advantages he lists might also be fairly applied to ancient history. First of all, Lee argues, church history 'is calculated to expand our knowledge of human nature'; it is easier to judge dispassionately the characters and deserts of the dead than the living. More generally, the study of a broad range of church history 'serves to introduce enlightened and unprejudiced views, and to stamp [a] character of ingenuousness, candour and forbearance'. Finally, 'without this knowledge, we may be in danger of relapsing … into errors the disastrous consequence of which have long ago been demonstrated by bitter experience.' All these

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124 Ibid. pp.6-8.  
125 Visitation Evidence i 607-624. See above ch.4 pp.86-88.
arguments could just as well be made for civil history in the same words, and suggest a fundamentally moral purpose in its study.

Lee also argues for the centrality of ecclesiastical affairs in civil history. 'This study … is connected to the general history of learning, science, legislation, public economy and national aggrandisement or decline.' He argues that the Church was and is at the centre of learning classical and modern, in literature, science and philosophy; in civil history church affairs particularly serve to illustrate 'the ruinous consequences of an undue interference between spiritual and secular authorities, and such a preponderance of either as destroys the just balance between the powers that be.' The latter is of particular moment for a Kirk about to split over just that issue; buried in a general discourse is a very particular political purpose for church history, to show the proper balance between church and state, and the dire consequences of disrupting it.126

Lee makes a specifically ecclesiastical case for his field as well, arguing again in three heads for the spiritual utility of church history: that it unfolds a full view of divine providence, that it renders the prophecies and other obscure passages of Scripture more comprehensible, and that 'it is necessary to complete the evidences of Divine Revelation'; that is, historical evidence can help prove the purely factual truths asserted in Scripture to cynics and doubters.

Lee was a rare scholar, a lifelong inmate of the Scottish universities who also reached far beyond them, and an eminent church historian.127 The Enlightenment narrative of Scottish society was critical of an ecclesiastical approach to history; Smith barely mentions religious institutions, and Pocock defines the historiography of the Scottish Enlightenment partly against structures based on Scripture and the history of Christianity.128

However, the prospective divines who formed a large proportion of the students at the Scottish universities clearly found the opportunity to study church history valuable, even if, like many students, they do not seem to have been assiduous in attending the lectures. Quite possibly many of his fellow professors of the subject could not have matched his range of ambitions for the course, and almost certainly few students heard the full four years of his

126 For the Disruption of 1843 and background, see Burleigh, Church History of Scotland pp.334-69
127 Lee arrived at Edinburgh aged 15, in 1794, spent seven years there, and held various academic posts from 1812-21 and from 1837 to his death in 1859. His Lectures on the History of the Church of Scotland, (Edinburgh 1860), were loosely based on parts of his half-century-old St Andrews course.
128 Pocock, Barbarism and Religion ii 12
lectures. However, his wide-ranging summary of the merits of his subject reflect the themes of other lecturers, and probably the ambitions of the founders of the three Chairs in the eighteenth century, and of the parish elders who valued Divinity Hall training.

Unlike civil history, there was no doubt that church history belonged in the Scottish university curriculum, and whilst none of the eighteenth-century civil history chairs endured continuously until the modern day, the three ecclesiastical history professorships are all still alive and flourishing. Church history was not taught in this manner in any Anglican university, and in fact was very little taught at all. The Anglican establishment had, perhaps, a greater self-confidence, and did not feel the need of historical support for its practices in the same way – it already had the sanction of a long tradition. Conversely, modern academies and dissenting academies did teach sacred history – for one example, see the Bath Academy curriculum discussed in Chapter 2. Like the Scots, they intermixed church history with Jewish history, with both entailing considerable discussion of ancient history if only to provide context.

129 See above, pp.28-9
Chapter 9 - Moral Philosophy

TP Miller describes the development of Moral Philosophy in the eighteenth century as a progression from a civic humanist tradition to a 'Political Science' divorced from the humanities.\textsuperscript{130} In the former, moral philosophers were very much rhetoricians in the Ciceronian sense of the word, concerned with the teaching of \textit{phronesis}, practical wisdom – in other words 'common sense' and civic ethics. By the end of the eighteenth century, this was being challenged by the new 'Political Science', a combination of the 'politics' which had previously formed only a small and often ill-regarded part of the overall scheme and the practically new 'science' of political economy. Ethics became a distinct subject in its own right, and increasingly separate from Politics; if still often covered by one professor in one course of lectures, the two were less intrinsically connected.

Knud Haakonssen draws a different divide down the centre of Scottish moral philosophy, between those who fundamentally believed that there was one model or set of models of ethical and social organisation, which would be varied largely by the 'character' of the people living in it, and those for whom 'history was essential to moral theory because moral consciousness, judgement and institutions were formed by those accommodations reached at a given stage of society and type of government.' Not only, as Montesquieu had observed, did manners make history, but history made manners as well.\textsuperscript{131} Both of these schematic views of philosophical divides are based on authors who were also teachers; of the principal authors of the Scottish Enlightenment mentioned by Miller and Haakonssen, only David Hume was not a professor at a Scottish University (and he actively sought, but failed to secure, a Chair of Moral Philosophy). In most cases, these authors' philosophy was expressed as neatly as anywhere else, and generally at much less length, in their professorial lectures, which in the mid-late eighteenth century would total around 100-120 hours in a 'full' course of one hour per day, five or less often six days a week, 24-29 weeks a year excluding holidays – anything up to half a million words, taken down at dictation speed by conscientious students and preserved in their notebooks.

With history as an independent subject occupying, as we have seen, a secondary position in the Scottish university, it would be in the class of moral philosophy that most Scottish

\textsuperscript{130} T.P. Miller, 'Frances Hutcheson and the Civic Humanist Tradition' in Hook & Sher (eds.) \textit{The Glasgow Enlightenment} p.42

\textsuperscript{131} K. Haakonssen, \textit{Natural Law and Moral Philosophy from Grotius to the Scottish Enlightenment} (Cambridge, 1996) p.6
students would most deeply consider the politics and society of the ancient world. Hume, of course, was a noted historian, but for many of his contemporaries history was part of their broader field; John Pocock characterises this as a distinctively Scottish Enlightenment view of the science of history, half-way between historiography and philosophy without successfully achieving Gibbon's ideal of the 'philosophic history'.  

Adam Ferguson drew out of the political part of his Moral Philosophy lectures the *History of Civil Society*, whilst Dugald Stewart coined the term 'conjectural history' to describe the combination of theory and historical knowledge on which Adam Smith's work was built.

Most professors of moral philosophy observed a trifold division of their subject, into 'duties to God', 'duties to oneself' and 'duties to others'. The latter part encompassed what is sometimes referred to as 'politics proper'; political, and later economic, theory and practice, though Thomas Chalmers of St Andrews rejected any role for politics and confined his Moral Philosophy course to ethics and natural theology. This division of the subject dates back to the previous century and was popularised by Heineccius in his *Law of Nature and Nations*, and is observed by most moral philosophy courses, whatever their professors' views on the subject. An interesting exception in terms of the order of subjects, proceeding outward from the soul to the world, is Adam Smith, who in the course of his tenure as Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow ceased to lecture in the conventional order and began to open his course with 'Remarks on Police, Revenue and Justice', which became the foundation of *The Wealth of Nations*. He then ended the course with the individual, a treatment which was very similar to the argument of his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, and with natural religion which he covered in as brief a manner as possible. This is ascribed by Haakonssen to Smith's fundamental belief that there is no such thing as a 'pre-social' state of mankind, so social organisation is one of the first principles of human nature from which study ought to begin; Smith's surviving *Lectures on Jurisprudence* certainly make this case, *contra* e.g. Hobbes, at length and early on.

All this had implications for the uses of ancient history as a source or teaching example for Moral Philosophy classes. Reference to the ancient world, either to particular instances or to

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132 J.G.A. Pocock *Barbarism and Religion* ii 362  
133 *Visitation Evidence* iii.77  
135 *Lectures on Jurisprudence* text A vol. i 27
grand sweeping visions of social development, abound in Moral Philosophy courses, with rare exceptions. Those exceptions are largely authors, such as William Cleghorn, the man most famous as the compromise 'anti-Hume' candidate for the Edinburgh Chair of Moral Philosophy, who attempted to demonstrate ethical truths from first principles without excessive exemplification\(^{136}\). Although he quotes a great many authorities on points of philosophical interpretation, including principally, among the Classics, Cicero, Plato and, albeit unfavourably, Lucretius, he does not choose to go into details of how any of his ideas are or were applied in practice. His focus is strongly ethical, concentrating on finding and pursuing 'The Supreme Good' and subordinating everything else to it, in a manner recognisably pre-figuring Utilitarianism. He is at pains to give alternative ideas as to what constitutes the Supreme Good, including discussion at length of Stoic, Peripatetic and Epicurean thoughts on the subject, but rather less so to talk about particulars.

Those many moral philosophers who did find it necessary to employ historical or current examples to support their schemes can be said to make four fundamentally different, though often overlapping, uses of ancient history. First, and least interesting, is the simple exemplum, the case of good or bad (i.e. moral or immoral) conduct in a particular incident by a particular individual. This is not actually particularly common, but sometimes appears in lectures dealing with personal ethics, often drawn from Cicero \textit{de officiis}, in the same sort of sense as John James read the \textit{Cyropaedia} at Oxford in the 1770s, that real examples had greater moral force than abstracts\(^{137}\).

The personal, moral examples may be distinguished from examples which illustrate an historical point, that is, a point about the development or organisation of society. These rely on the unique value of the ancient world, and particularly Rome, as a parallel, as well as an ancestor, to contemporary Britain. In the Rome of, perhaps, 100BC to 100AD could be found an obvious case-study for political and social theories, freer from unfortunate political implications than an equivalent endeavour based in England. Discussions of Scotland as distinct from England or Britain are, incidentally, rare, except for remarks concerning the Civil Law; the constitutional and institutional arrangements of the Kingdom of Scotland seem to have been forgotten with alacrity, perhaps because they were so clearly medieval and 'backward' in nature.

\(^{136}\) EUL MS EUL Dc.3.3-6, W.Cleghorn, \textit{Lectures on Moral Philosophy 1746-7}

\(^{137}\) James Beattie used a commentary on \textit{De Officiis} to begin his course of lectures; it is preserved in EUL MSDc.8.28. For James' reading see p.120 above.
The reasons why examples from ancient history are so commonly used to demonstrate points of political theory are several. First and foremost, there is the general idea expressed by whichever of the many Professors Gordon (probably Thomas, fl.1790s) was the author of the Lectures on Moral Philosophy given at King's College Aberdeen in about 1790-1, who wrote that 'the Roman government in its rise, progress and decline may be seen as an epitome of the history of mankind'.\textsuperscript{138} This is a natural consequence of the fact that Rome was the common patrimony of Western scholarship, so any particular developments since had naturally been compared to the history of Rome; thus Rome was seen as an 'ideal' or archetypal example of social and political progress. In effect, this is the outcome of the Quarrel of Ancients and Moderns posited by Joseph Levine, who argues that 'modernity' clearly won out in many but not all fields of learning, and that in the long run, new thinking and scholarship would transform even the study of the ancient world, so that the use of modern means gave the lie to Ancient ends.\textsuperscript{139} Levine refers specifically to the development of philology, but his model can be usefully applied to moral philosophy which had clearly outgrown Aristotle without discarding the study of the world which gave him birth.

This universalising perspective on the Roman experience stands in contrast to Classical authorities who saw Rome as a unique departure from the historical norm. This is in a sense a natural progression; by the eighteenth century there were more examples in the Western world of stable societies than had been available to theorists of the last two centuries BC. As the ancestor of Western European society, Rome had become the new normal, a standard to refer to rather than an exception to explain. The universality of Rome's history was occasionally disputed, however. Millar at Glasgow, as we have already seen, used Rome not as a universal example of historical process, but as a primitive comparison to the modern states of Europe, whilst Adam Ferguson, generally an admirer of classical culture, could nonetheless create in a few lines a memorable image of a modern traveller appalled by the rough and violent nature of ancient life.\textsuperscript{140} Polybius described Rome as the state which had broken, at least temporarily, the \textit{anacyclosis}, the endless rise and decay of different forms of government, by establishing a 'mixed constitution' with features of all three Aristotelian forms of government; monarchy (in the form of the consuls), aristocracy and democracy.\textsuperscript{141} Moral philosophers and natural lawyers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries kept the idea of

\textsuperscript{138} AUL MSS 3107/5/2/6
\textsuperscript{139} J.M. Levine, 'Ancients and Moderns Reconsidered' in \textit{Reenacting the Past} (London 2004) pp.1-19
\textsuperscript{140} A. Ferguson, \textit{Essay on the History of Civil Society} (Edinburgh 1767) pp.325-7
\textsuperscript{141} Polybius, \textit{Histories} VI.3-18
Aristotelian 'pure' forms of government, and some maintained Polybius' cycle, but changed some of the details to accommodate modern European monarchy and, crucially, dropped the idea of Roman exceptionalism. To Adam Smith or Dugald Stewart, the mixed constitution was the norm, though both accepted, after Montesquieu, that there would always be one dominant element in any society, and increasingly this was connected to control not of political institutions but of land and wealth.

Particularly influential was the division suggested by Montesquieu, which added a fourth 'simple' type of government, the despotism, which was distinguished from monarchy by the absence of 'a constitution of sorts … a law of succession to the throne and countervailing bodies like the aristocracy and church, and/or of intermediary bodies like parlements that the ruler was bound to consult'. This is an excellent example of adjusting fundamentally Classical thought structures to fit Enlightenment realities; the idea of a limited versus a despotic conception of monarchy was visible to Greek authors, giving rise to the idea of tyranny as a degenerate form of monarchy, but Aristotle and Polybius implied a natural progression from monarchy to tyranny, which would not have been acceptable to a loyal (if critical) Frenchman and aristocrat, nor reflected the experience of medieval and early modern Europe where long-established monarchies did not appear to have become more tyrannical over time.

Ferguson, among others, broadly follows Montesquieu in his typology of governments, as part of a scheme of political philosophy unashamedly based in actual historical experience and the contingent conditions of Western society. For example, Ferguson in his Principles of Moral and Political Science, based directly on his Moral Philosophy lectures, adduces the evidence of Tacitus and Herodotus to demonstrate that a pre-social and pre-political state of mankind is a chimera. Even the most primitive of peoples, Tacitus' Germans and Herodotus' Scythians, have 'some vague and customary government', some form of leadership and decision-making process. The roots of Law, too, can be historically established and again Tacitus' Germania is taken as an authority on the oldest forms of customary law. Law-codes

143 A little earlier, c.1744, David Gregory at King's Coll. Aberdeen had Montesquieu on Rome on his Moral Philosophy reading-list (AUL MS 2206/45), and he remained under Gregory's successor Dunbar, whose lectures on the political part of the course closely followed L'Esprit des Lois (AUL MS 3107/5/2-6)
144 A. Ferguson, Principles of moral and political science; being chiefly a retrospect of lectures delivered in the College of Edinburgh (2vols, Edinburgh 1792) i 259
are taken to originate in the dictates of an oppressive regime, as in the XII Tables; a somewhat cynical reading of Livy, but far from unsupportable, though interestingly Ferguson has a more positive view of early Roman law in his *Roman Republic*. Ferguson explicitly omits 'revealed' Law from discussion, as a theological matter from which it is impossible to generalise. He establishes History as one of the two fundamental classes into which all knowledge can be divided - 'History, the goal of which is to know particulars', and Science, which aims to discover general principles. However, History also encompasses the selection and ordering of those details, so in practice partakes of Science, whilst Science requires the evidence of History.

In general, Ferguson is far more on the side of 'History' than 'Science', as may be seen from the titles of his most significant works. Introducing Aristotle and Polybius' typologies of constitutions, he skims over them in a few pages at the very end of *Moral and Political Science*, preferring to concentrate on a more practical view directed at his students' immediate needs; to accommodate themselves to the state and times in which they are living. A cure for an imperfectly-founded constitution would, except in cases of egregious tyranny, almost certainly be worse than the disease. A similar concern for 'the character of man as he now exists', within the scope of recorded history, is evident in the introduction to the *Essay on the History of Civil Society*. A good example of this attachment in Ferguson's lectures to considering the feasible rather than the ideal may be seen in contrasting his thoughts on standing armies in the *History of Civil Society* with those in *Moral and Political Science*. The former (Section V) concentrates mainly on the risks inherent in the present tendency towards professional armies as 'effeminate kingdoms and empires are spread from the Atlantic to the sea of Corea'; in all those states the citizenry is neither armed nor willing to be armed. The latter takes a more moderate and practical position, following Adam Smith; that in a modern economy the middle classes are better employed in commercial pursuits than in frequent military service, and 'military service … may be intrusted to those who make it an honourable calling' in broadly peaceful times, so long as the yeomanry rallies round in time of crisis.

Ferguson, like Gordon and Turnbull, sometimes uses Rome as a direct comparator for Britain,

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145 A. Ferguson, *History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic* (3vols London 1785) i 36-9
146 Ibid p.302
147 Ibid. pp.272-4
148 Ibid pp.492-500
149 Ferguson, *History of Civil Society* Section I p.6
150 Ibid. Section V pp.252-4
151 Ferguson, *Moral and Political Science* ii 492
in particular when discussing civil liberties in the *History of Civil Society*. Two points particularly stand out. First we can see the natural tension between executive and people in a democratic or part-democratic state. Even as the executive and upper classes feel at the mercy of the mob, the people (despite recognising the need for a strong executive, especially in times of crisis) will be constantly threatened by growth and abuse of power.\(^{152}\) It is from this that Ferguson's second strong parallel arises; Rome and Britain are presented as the great law-giving states of their eras. Democracies are generally not states with a strong rule of law, as they have an institutional preference 'to trust in the sense of the public' rather than precedent and usage in any given case.\(^{153}\) In Rome and Britain the mixed constitution leaves the Law as the nearest thing to a neutral arbiter, though even there an active citizenry is required to exert constant pressure to preserve the rule of law. The example given is that of *habeas corpus*, inconvenient to administrations which would quite like to be able to lock up inconvenient citizens at will, and therefore constantly requiring to be fought for by the people.

However, Ferguson is also capable of criticising this facile mode of comparison between the ancient and modern worlds. A particularly striking passage invites the reader to imagine that he has been transported to Classical Greece as a traveller. Despite the flourishing of art and literature, Ferguson expects his hypothetical tourist would find the country poor, backward, disorderly, shockingly inhumane (especially in the treatment of slaves and women) and generally rather baffling even in Athens. If the tourist ended up in Sparta any illusions of ancient nobility would be thoroughly shattered.\(^{154}\) Social ideals are also contrasted; the ancient war hero, real or legendary, was a brutal thug in comparison to the chivalric hero who is the root of 'modern' conceptions of the ideal soldier. This is a rare case of Ferguson mentioning the beneficial influence of Christianity; even if the *chevalier sans peur et sans reproche* is a less realistic figure than Hector, mercy to the vanquished and obedience to the laws of war are 'the mild spirit of Christianity' at its best.\(^{155}\)

Beyond the familiarity of Rome and the feeling that it sat on a similar level of social development to Britain, there is one more significant reason for the preponderance of case studies drawn from Roman history, namely, the continuing influence of Roman Law. 'Politics proper' was frequently referred to under the alternative heading of 'jurisprudence' or 'public law', by authors including Adam Smith, and there was a strong influence from the traditions

\(^{152}\) Ferguson, *History of Civil Society* p.370
\(^{153}\) Ibid. p.373
\(^{154}\) Ibid. pp.325-7
\(^{155}\) Ibid. pp.330-4
of both natural and civil law. In the latter case, this is represented most thoroughly by the lectures of George Turnbull, whose lectures at Marischal College Aberdeen in the 1720s, later adapted into book form, took the form of his own free translation and commentary on Heineccius, with frequent digressions from Heineccius' text for elaborations or explanations. Obviously, a lecture series based on the Civil Law used predominantly classical sources for support. Discussing the origins of property, Turnbull quotes Plutarch, Polybius, Plato and copious quantities of Scripture, but no modern authorities at all, save Pufendorf.\textsuperscript{156}

Turnbull also discusses at length the origins of states, again using Classical models because modern states cannot be said to have 'originated' in the same sense, being built on the ruins of older polities. Other authors do not make this point explicitly, perhaps aware that neither Rome nor Greece really arose in a vacuum, but the sense of this practice is obvious and probably offers another reason for the many uses of classical evidence to support points of this kind. Turnbull, unusually, discusses particular authors and the merits of their accounts; he finds Dionysius of Halicarnassus more reliable on the origins of Rome than Livy, and extols Polybius' insight into the nature of politics before quoting at length his constitutional theories.\textsuperscript{157} This passage goes on to give an excellent summary of the relationship between history and political philosophy; one can derive from philosophy 'what ends right reason dictates as the ends to be proposed in constituting civil government, and what means' (what would later become known as conjectural history), whereas:

\begin{quote}
[H]ow various governments were formed [is] a question of fact or history, and the principal advantage of history is instruction in the natural effects of various constitutions in different situations: or the knowledge of what moral connexions and causes produce in different circumstances, and the knowledge of the rise of different circumstances from internal or external causes.
\end{quote}

He goes on to compare history to the observation of the natural world necessary to natural philosophy; written history is the moral philosopher's laboratory, philosophy teaching by examples, to borrow a phrase from Dionysius, whom Turnbull had certainly read in depth.\textsuperscript{158}

In short, Turnbull's position is that Philosophy without History risks becoming detached from

\textsuperscript{156} G. Turnbull, \textit{A methodical system of universal law: or, the laws of nature and nations deduced from certain principles, and applied to proper cases. Written in Latin by the celebrated Jo. Got. Heineccius, ... Translated, and illustrated with notes and supplements, by George Turnbull, LL.D.} (London 1741) p.178. Despite the title, this is only in the loosest sense a translation, really more in the nature of a discursive commentary.

\textsuperscript{157} Ibid. p.417

\textsuperscript{158} This phrase is often attributed to Thucydides; in fact Dionysius puts it into the earlier author's mouth. It may be an authentic quotation from a lost work, or an example of 'Dionysian \textit{imitatio}' whereby Dionysius borrowed the style of older authors in a rhetorical attempt to lay claim to their authority.
the 'real world' and degenerating into the same sort of narrow and fruitless speculation as the Scholastics.

Perhaps in contrast to the fundamentally historicising approach of a Turnbull, an Adam Ferguson or a Gordon, Adam Smith gave a name to a practice that had been common since at least Hobbes, if not Aristotle; deriving from, as Turnbull put it 'reason' what could be presumed to have happened in the course of human development, even if actual historical evidence for it did not or could not exist. This was 'conjectural history', the sort of work we would now describe as, perhaps, 'theories of history', attempts to explain and systematise the whole course of society, or of some particular social development.

In some ways this is a natural development of older, simpler ways of using history to inform political philosophy. Smith draws extensively on real historical examples of the various stages and conditions of society in the Lectures on Jurisprudence; for example, his treatment of the development of private property from terra nullius draws on the Greek and Roman experience of founding new colonies in the territory of defeated or exterminated enemies. However, he is suspicious of the use of history per se as a tool for understanding politics or society; the genre of history, for Smith, is still exemplified by Livy and Tacitus; it is moral and entertaining, even frivolous, not scholarly. Filling history with tiresome proofs and demonstrations as modern scholars do may be useful for settling ecclesiastical or political disputes based on contestable claims about historical fact, but this destroys the moral and rhetorical force of a narrative history.

Smith shows how he is using the idea of the ancient world as a comparator for modern Britain in several places, but seems to locate that period of equivalence in Britain's past. He explicitly refers to the reign of Henry VIII as the time at which modern society became as socially developed as the ancient world had been, in the context of a discussion of testamentary laws, which he considers a mark of a certain degree of sophistication and human feeling in a society. In other contexts, we have for example the development of a standing army, which is treated as a function of achieving a state of economic development where the middle orders cannot be called up en masse to serve in the army, as they cannot be spared from economically productive activity, and lead comfortable lives which they are unwilling to

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159 Smith, Lectures on Jurisprudence A i 50-4
161 Smith, Lectures on Jurisprudence A i 155
abandon en masse. In England this happened in, again, the Tudor period, but was not noticed until the Civil War, due to the long peace. In Rome, the equivalent point was reached in the last years of the second century BC, not long before the peak of Roman civilisation. This stands, incidentally, in contrast to Adam Ferguson who as we have seen believed a military citizenry was a good and attainable institution in all states.

Thus we see that in Smith's four-stage model of social development the Roman Empire, only somewhat commercialised and with its wealth still based on conquest and agriculture, was not quite at the same advanced stage of commercial development as that of Britain (or France) in the 1750s. It is true that he does not detect so great a difference in the sphere of high culture; in particular, an instructive passage in the Lectures on Rhetoric has Smith explaining why Tacitus was popular in the early 2nd century; namely that the rich, tranquil and refined inhabitants of a luxurious monarchy had developed an interest in the psychological motivators of history as well as the mere facts. This, says Smith, is paralleled in contemporary French literature; no surprise as, like the Romans under the Five Good Emperors, France is a wealthy monarchy several decades into a period of relative peace and prosperity following bruising (and wealth-draining) civil wars, and struggling as a society to understand the causes of those wars.162

Adam Smith's disciple and biographer Dugald Stewart carried the high claims of Political Economy as a means of explaining social institutions and historical developments to what was perhaps its logical conclusion. Stewart himself had not been taught by Smith; he first attended Edinburgh University where he was taught by Adam Ferguson, and moved to Glasgow for a year in the hope of securing a Snell Exhibition to attend Balliol College and read for the Anglican Church. He was thus lectured by both Ferguson and Thomas Reid, two of the greatest moral philosophers of their day and both believers in the continuing relevance of ancient history.

However, by the end of his Lectures on Political Economy and Outlines of Moral Philosophy, Stewart had made a comprehensive case for the fundamental irrelevance of the ancient world to practical modern Political Economy, and for that of History as a whole as a guide to statesmen's future actions or education for future statesmen. In passing, in the Outlines of Moral Philosophy which were expressly produced as a textbook, Stewart dismisses the

162 Smith, Lectures on Rhetoric p.111. I am indebted to N.Phillipson, Adam Smith: An Enlightened Life p.99 for his discussion of this passage.
connection between civil and natural law with the remark that the latter had 'servilely copied
the forms' of the former and thus introduced much irrelevant matter merely because it was in
the Roman Law, even when it was quite irrelevant to 'real' natural rights.\footnote{D. Stewart, Outlines of Moral Philosophy: For the Use of Students in the University of Edinburgh (Edinburgh 1818) p.261}

In the Political Economy lectures Stewart quotes Hume to the effect that 'the world is too young as yet to enable us to form predictions with confidence from the history of past ages' but goes well beyond this in arguing that the onward march of history, especially in the form of technological developments, had obviated much of past experience.\footnote{D. Stewart, Complete Works (9vols, London 1855) ix 413. V olumes VIII and IX constitute the editors' reconstruction from surviving lecture notes of Stewart's lecture course on Political Economy as it stood in the first decade of the 19th century.} This relationship with ancient history is not quite so stark as merely denying its relevance, but rather takes it as a mine of mistakes to be avoided, not of examples to be followed. In particular, Stewart devoted what his editors cautiously reconstructed as a second introductory lecture to a 15-page exegesis of the ways in which 'the circumstances of Modern Europe … have imposed upon statesmen the necessity of searching for other lights than what are to be collected from the institutions of ancient Greece and Rome'.\footnote{D. Stewart, Complete Works viii 21} This sidelong glance at the exactly contemporary lectures of Gordon (quoted above p.182 on Rome's history as the history of all mankind) and their ilk begins an indictment of the whole tendency to look to the ancient world for models of good governance.

Among the respects in which ancient policy is held to have been deficient compared to modern practice, the ancients are held to have been uniformly counter-productively bellicose, indifferent to the sufferings of the lower classes and, especially, totally ignorant of economic policy. A long passage contrasts Xenophon On the Improvement of the Revenue of the State of Athens with Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations. The former, says Stewart, takes no account of 'man's natural propensities' but only of regulation and governmental intervention, which were the cause of many of Athens' economic woes.\footnote{D. Stewart, Complete Works viii 36} Whilst Xenophon can predict a vigorous programme of public building might lead to a bustling waterfront of handsome warehouses and abundant trade, it would, at best and assuming, which Stewart clearly implies he does not believe, that Xenophon is right to say foreign traders would willingly subscribe to such works, achieve 'at the public expense, by the labour of slaves and by the subsidies of strangers, what a free people in our days are constantly performing by their own industrious
exertions.'\textsuperscript{167} By the end of the same lecture course, Stewart is still more explicit in dismissing the instructive value of ancient experience, beginning what might have served as a concluding section at the end of his treatment of politics proper: 'Any important circumstances conspire to render the present situation of the human race essentially different to whatever it was in former times and to promise a stability to science and civilisation which they never before possessed'.\textsuperscript{168} This is Stewart's way of reconciling the fact that Polybius' \textit{anacyclosis} described ancient politics very well with the equally evident observation that it does not describe the states of modern Europe. Whereas Montesquieu could explain this as a difference of \textit{mores}, Stewart's assertion that human motivations are always much the same, albeit modified by circumstances, renders this a weak position for him. Stewart would prefer to ascribe the change to the spread of printing and literacy, and '[the turn of] the speculative attentions of men from the idle subtleties of the schools and the comparatively uninteresting pursuit of physical knowledge to those studies which aim at the improvement and the happiness of society' which fundamentally altered the conditions of society, such that old realities no longer applied.\textsuperscript{169}

The last of those assertions becomes rather more pointed in the very final remarks, which include Stewart's claim that 'what I would chiefly rest my hopes upon, in looking forward ... is the influence which the science of Political Economy ... must necessarily have, in directing the rulers of nations to just principles of administration by showing them how intimately the interests of government are connected with those of the people...'.\textsuperscript{170} The development of Political Economy and thus of an effective, benevolent approach to government for, if not of, the people is credited with preventing the rise of rulers quite so depraved as were frequently recorded in the ancient world – 2000 years of European monarchy are said never to have produced a Caligula, Nero or Domitian (who ruled Rome in a space of under 50 years). Traditionally, the direction of rulers to just principles of governance was part of the province assigned to the study of history.\textsuperscript{171} In Stewart's vision, the useful parts of history were those applicable to demonstrating the truths of economic policy, and a Faculty of History (had he conceived of so strange a thing) a mere preparation for the higher and more enlightening

\textsuperscript{167} Stewart, \textit{Complete Works} viii 38

\textsuperscript{168} Stewart, \textit{Complete Works} ix 398

\textsuperscript{169} Stewart, \textit{Complete Works} ix 398-9

\textsuperscript{170} Stewart, \textit{Complete Works} ix 400-1

\textsuperscript{171} Pocock, \textit{Barbarism and Religion} ii 369-70
study of Political Economy.

Such bold claims for the merits of political economy, especially for its place at the peak of the regular curriculum, may explain the otherwise puzzling failure of the various History professorships to prosper in Scotland. As we have seen, Glasgow's Lectureship existed only very sporadically, the course of History at Marischal was abbreviated to a mere ten weeks, and the Edinburgh Chair was only really active under two of its eighteenth-century holders. The competing claim to attention of political economy was in many ways a strong one. Unlike history, it evolved within the traditional philosophy curriculum, a natural offshoot of moral philosophy. Its claims to universalism appealed to what was often described, for example by Mackintosh above, as the Scottish taste for abstraction, theory and generalisation. History, in Stewart's formulation, could only tell you what happened, unless it had some higher structure to explain why, and what should be done about it. Even Smith, who was a voracious reader of history, treated Tacitus' explanations of the early Roman Empire as a psychologically satisfying exercise rather than a useful attempt to explain the period to posterity. Few historians today would dispute Stewart's assertion, that it is necessary to interpret history according to some hypothesis or priority, but when 'history' as a teaching subject stereotypically tended to mean critical polyhistory, a gallop through the history of the world from the Creation, it is understandable that Stewart saw it as ancillary to his main purpose.

Stewart's conception of history is perhaps reflected by the fairly small and conventional range of authorities referred to in courses of moral philosophy. Very seldom is there anything in any way obscure referred to, or any specific author beyond, perhaps, Cicero or Livy. The periods and places discussed rarely range outside Classical Athens, those parts of Roman republican history covered by the surviving portions of Livy, the first century BC and the first AD; modern history then begins at some point in the fifth or sixth century. Any student could have understood the references and cases referred to if he had read a decent epitome or breviary of Roman History and perhaps a very little on Greece. Where social institutions are discussed in depth, the ancient details are usually simplified to what might be described as 'common knowledge', such as anyone who had studied the Civil Law would certainly possess. Adam Smith, for example, discusses the institution of marriage at Rome in a sketchy and schematic manner which does not delve into the complexities discussed in, for example, Mackie's Roman Antiquities lectures.172 There is little mention of Republican Rome's four (at least)

172 Smith, Lectures on Jurisprudence A iii 8, 30-5
forms of marriage, or their evolution either side of Cicero's time.

This comparatively small measure of classical reading is well adapted to the very young Scottish undergraduate, typically deficient in Latin and Greek compared to his older English contemporaries. A Humanity class with a little in the way of antiquities would provide more than sufficient information on ancient culture for the student to understand the background to the Moral Philosophy lectures, and the more committed students would be expected to read independently, especially Cicero whose *De Officiis* was still a significant (if philosophically outmoded) text for general *phronesis* and also introduced much incidental detail about Roman society. James Beattie at Aberdeen (the elder moral philosopher, not his son and successor or his nephew the natural historian), among others, specifically recommended that his students read *De Officiis* and *De Senectute* in the summer vacation.¹⁷³

However, the courses at Edinburgh and Glasgow had specifically to be suitable for students who were not following the general curriculum but merely attending individual classes; at Aberdeen, the same effect was achieved by the extremely limited education of students from the rural parishes of which submissions to *Visitation Evidence* complained.¹⁷⁴ This placed a sharp limitation on the level of prior knowledge required, and probably on the appetite for instructive digression on matters historical and philological; courses were perpetually time-pressured and paying customers were not forking out for ramblings on other subjects they could hear elsewhere. It would be particularly interesting here, discussing a subject studied by the majority of Scottish students, to have more of a student perspective on the late eighteenth-century Scottish university. However, as mentioned in the introduction to this Part (pp. 136-7) the history of the Scottish university has thus far been written from a top-down or outside perspective. The task of reconstructing the intellectual experience of a student under Smith or Stewart has been given little attention; sources are not readily available, and I am not aware of any more qualitative study building on the crude alumni lists of the nineteenth-century multi-volume institutional historians, save Colin McLaren's brief study of *Aberdeen Students*, already much discussed, and Esther Mijers' study of correspondence from Scottish students overseas.

Despite these provisos, Moral Philosophy courses were deeply classical in content and

¹⁷³ Discussed in Wood, *The Aberdeen Enlightenment* p. 122
¹⁷⁴ *Visitation Evidence* iv 12 mentions that the level of Latin among King's Aberdeen's intake is so low a year has to be spent on grammar and prosody.
exemplary matter, drawing closely on ancient theories of politics and history even as they surpassed them. If a Scottish student emerged from Glasgow or Edinburgh with a knowledge of Roman society or Greek political history, the odds were that he had acquired it in the moral philosophy class, perhaps at the feet of a professor who would have loudly denied the relevance of ancient history to a modern, philosophical education. This is a totally different way of using ancient history to the narrow, text-based readings we find in college tutorials at Oxford and Cambridge; broader, less specific, but much more theoretical and much more obviously related to contemporary concerns.

These classes, unlike the other locations where ancient history might be encountered in the Scottish university, were popular, attended not just by undergraduates on the 'Divinity Hall' course, but by interested students in other faculties and by an unknown but large proportion of townsmen who might never attend another university lecture. Where Mackie, Tytler, the Church Historians and even Millar struggled for double figures, Moral Philosophy class-lists at Glasgow and Edinburgh frequently reach into the hundreds by the late eighteenth century, and due to the inconsistent recording of the issue of gratis-tickets and doubtless varying attendance over the year, the true figures may have been higher.\footnote{\textit{Visitation Evidence} ii 527 has the Glasgow class sizes from c.1780. Having declined to a low of 78 in the 1790s, the class size rose rapidly and peaked at 224 in 1817. Ibid. i 131-3 has the equivalent figures at Edinburgh from 1794, showing a slightly larger class.}
Having examined the teaching of ancient history in various contexts across the British Isles, it is now time to consider how this teaching was put to use in the wider world. There has been a great deal written on classical culture in the eighteenth century, so this chapter will consider an area which has been relatively little considered: the direct impact of ancient history on political discourse, as a source of analogies, precedents and ways of interpreting contemporary issues. As we have seen, preparation for public life was one of the main reasons for studying history offered by both the classical and 'modern' curricula, and a major driving force behind the establishment of new professorships and classes.

By the late 1750s and beyond, we can see students at the time of the earliest moves toward the formal teaching of ancient history moving into public life. Concerns about the use of history and the relevance of the ancient world expressed in academia are, from time to time, mirrored in political discourse. Furthermore, it is also a period when there are increasingly full and comprehensive sources for debates in Parliament, so we can know much more about how debates were carried on 'in real time' than for earlier periods. The increasing growth of newspapers and essay-sheets to complement the already well-established art of the political pamphlet also allows the back-and-forth of a more public debate to be traced much more easily and accurately.

The relevance of ancient history to public life will be explored through three case studies, exploring different classical personae which the educated man might consider adopting in a political context, as well as considering how the examples, precedents and events of ancient history could be useful in the practical politics of the second half of the eighteenth century. A relatively brief study will cover the newspaper wars of the 1760s and the use of classical imagery and analogies by the popular press. The political press of England at this time could be seen as analogous to the Roman tribunes of the plebs; the defenders of liberty against overweening elites (ch.10), and its uses of the classical past reflect the potential of ancient history to be, as David Womersley has suggested, a source of subversive and anti-government ideas. This is mirrored by a consideration of the parallels seen between the British and Roman empires qua empires and specifically the case of India as the field of operations of the aristocratic proconsul and the domestic orators who prosecuted his misdeeds (ch.12).¹ These

¹ N.B., the title 'proconsul' was not formally used by the British state and its common use as a generic term for a high-level colonial governor is Victorian. The role, however, of a colonial official ruling over a large,
roles were both thought of in classical terms and the frequent use of classicising language, examples, models and case studies in discussing them clearly reflects an engagement, although sometimes from a position of relative ignorance, with Roman history.

The theme of ancient history in specifically political discourse will be developed in a more in-depth study of the debates in Parliament surrounding the 'American question', from c.1755 to the final confirmation of the American colonies' independence in 1783 (ch.11). The latter has traditionally been seen as a venue for 'classical republicanism' being discussed and put into practice by the colonists, and much has been written on classicism and ancient history in American independence politics. However, the use of ancient history in Britain extended to conservative and pro-American voices alike, reflecting a cultural engagement with the ancient world which could bear different interpretations and values. All three cases are examples of the sort of 'public life' for which ancient history was traditionally thought to be part of a suitable training, and most of the figures discussed here were university-educated at a time when the number of students, even as a proportion of the upper classes, was relatively low. If the British university taught ancient history to prepare its youth to be active citizens, these are the areas where we find that teaching put into practice.

_culturally alien colonised population, originated with the consolidation of the East India Company's position by Clive._
Chapter 10 - Wilkes and Libertas? Ancient Rome and Greece in Party Polemic, 1755-74

It is a commonplace of eighteenth-century studies that ancient Greece and Rome were still looked to, as they had been for centuries, as models of civic virtue and good politics. Because the ancient world was familiar to educated men across Europe, it was a primary source of case studies in practical and theoretical politics, from Machiavelli through Locke and Montesquieu. However, the example of the ancient world was not merely an academic and theoretical one. Even in the most urgent and specific of political debates, speakers and authors of all political stripes appealed to classical precedents, drew analogies to the ancient world and sought inspiration or dreadful warnings from its history. Regardless of their political affiliation, the majority shared a class background and had been similarly raised on stories from Roman and, to a lesser extent, Greek history. Even when proposing radical measures, classical references could, as well as their particular import, signal membership in an educated elite – and perhaps seek to deny such membership to ignorant opponents.

One of the key classical roles in which an eighteenth-century statesman might cast himself was that of the tribune of the plebs. In Republican Rome, the tribunes had three key powers. Their persons were absolutely sacrosanct – to lay hands on a tribune was legally considered high treason, punishable by particularly unpleasant death. They had the power of convening the plebeian assemblies, which could make laws. Finally, they had the right to veto any action by a higher magistrate. None of these powers, obviously, existed in eighteenth-century Britain. Rather, the tribunate was remembered as the extra-parliamentary defence of the popular interest against aristocratic, urbane, élite power. For this reason, its role was hotly contested.

As discussed in Chapter 3, many historians felt that the tribunate had been a destabilising influence and that the 'popular element' in the Roman constitution should have been confined to electing the magistrates and other roles within the hierarchical system which the tribunes stood outside. Conflict between the Senate and Tribunes is common in Republican history, and Adam Ferguson showed no hesitation in firmly blaming the Tribunes for escalating the situation. Conversely, Nathaniel Hooke considered the campaigning tribunes of the late

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2 Oxford Classical Dictionary, 2nd Ed. (1970), 'Tribuni Plebis.'
3 See above, ch.3, and especially A. Ferguson, History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic (3rd ed., 3vols Dublin 1783) i 307
second century, especially the Gracchi brothers, to have been the last hope of the Republic before they were crushed by aristocratic vested interests.⁴

The appeal to extra-parliamentary radicals of the mantle and image of the tribunate is obvious. It is not coincidental that so many newspapers were and are called 'the Tribune'. Alongside opposition in Parliament, the self-styled tribunes of the eighteenth century issued their defiance in print in a succession of newspapers. The opposition press adopted Roman precedents and imagery on a large scale, and was echoed in doing so by the government press, which could find equally strong classical precedents against the power of 'the mob', and in favour of stability in the face of utopian projections.

Few political issues of the eighteenth century seem more lacking in grand implications and universal relevancies than the fervent party strife of 1760-63, the period when the weekly political papers dominated London gossip, John Wilkes distinguished Jesuitically between the King and his Ministers, and the Monitor set out what Marie Peters has called 'a coherent and complete set of political attitudes and ideas [in which] are to be found the ideological roots of modern radicalism'.⁵ The whole question, both in narrowly personal terms and in the larger issue of peace or war, was and has been studied as a deeply British one, steeped in traditions of Parliament and the press which were seen as, and indeed largely were, quite independent of any foreign influence, save perhaps, for the Opposition, that of the perfidious Scot.⁶ Four major papers are discussed here. On the side of William Pitt and the Opposition in general, including Wilkes himself, the Monitor and the North Briton; on the side of the Government in the person of the Earl of Bute, the Briton and the Auditor.

This debate is credited by Hannah Barker with forcing Bute from office – a fairly impressive achievement for a handful of newspapermen with very little actual scandal to write about – and, furthermore, a debate carried on partly in the language of ancient history.⁷ These newspapers were read by an educated, or at least semi-educated, audience, concentrated but not exclusively based in London, who could be expected to recognise and appreciate classical

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⁴ N.Hooke, Roman History: From the Building of Rome to the Ruin of the Commonwealth (4vols, London 1738-71) iii 4-6
⁵ M.Peters, 'The 'Monitor' on the constitution, 1755-1765: new light on the ideological origins of English radicalism’ in English Historical Review vol.86 no.4 (1977) pp.706-728
allusions (up to a point) and had a great appetite for comment as well as for news. 8 Whilst many of the authors were anonymous, three names are well-known. The main authors of the *North Briton* were John Wilkes and Charles Churchill. The former was educated sporadically, but spent some time at Leiden in the Netherlands, which had a strong tradition of history teaching discussed earlier in chapters 1 and 6. Charles Churchill went to Westminster School where he became ‘a good classical scholar’ and was admitted to St John's College, Cambridge, but dropped out in his first term, possibly without even residing, in order to marry. 9 On the other side, the lead author of the *Briton* was picaresque novelist and former surgeon Tobias Smollett, who had been educated at Glasgow University. Glasgow was not particularly distinguished by its classical scholarship in the 1730s, however, and it is notable that of these four papers the *Briton* is probably the least likely to enter into extended classical allusions. 10

By volume or weight of argument, the most common form of discourse in the papers and pamphlets of the period is personal – one does not quite like to say 'invective', but at any rate concerned with personalities and individual deeds. Next most common is historical exemplification drawn from British history; in particular, it was very common for the *Monitor, North Briton* and their fellow anti-administration papers to compare Bute to the Earl Mortimer, which logically cast, without the necessity of openly libelling the royal family, the Princess Mother as Isabella the She-Wolf, Queen and supposed murderer of Edward II, and George III as the young and initially ill-advised Edward III, who eventually recognised the machinations of his mother and guardian. 11

However, ancient examples and analogies come a reasonably close third in frequency. Most prevalent, and most often addressed by previous investigations, are simple and simplistic comparisons of persons and personalities. This is not surprising. Most of the writers, as educated men, would have grown up with morally improving anecdotes taken from the lives of great men of antiquity. The personal examples, positive and negative, of individuals in the Greco-Roman world were still considered a major impetus for the teaching of ancient history.
by Walker in the 1820s. Rollin wrote his Roman History, as discussed in Chapter 3, with the object of showing virtuous lives lived under a variety of political circumstances. Where there are heroes, there are often equally great villains. There are two particularly well-known villains in this debate, from opposite sides of the party divide. On the anti-government side there is John Wilkes as Catiline, the famous conspirator against Cicero and the Roman Republic in 62BC. The name is invariably spelled by the Briton 'Cataline' despite frequently-published corrections by Wilkes and others, perhaps in an attempt to suggest 'catamite'. On the other hand, Bute is cast as as Sejanus, the favourite, agent and power behind the throne of Tiberius, the Roman historian Tacitus' case study in the deleterious effects on the body politic of palace intrigue. Beyond Tacitus and Suetonius, two of the most widely-read ancient historians then and now, Sejanus might also have been familiar as the eponymous villain of Ben Jonson's tragedy, which was adapted by Francis Gentleman in 1752, though there is no evidence of a performance, and reprinted with a dedication to Bute in 1770! Note, though, that Gentleman was no more a fool than a gentleman, and saved his dedication for several years after Bute's fall from power.

This analogy sparked synthetic outrage from the government press as it seemed to suggest George III in the role of Tiberius, the out-of-touch Emperor; at best misinformed, at worst complicit in his underling's manifold sins and wickednesses. Nobody seems to have even dared mention another comparison obvious to anyone who had read Suetonius; Bute was tutor to the teenage George III, and Sejanus was briefly responsible for the education of the Roman Empire's great hope, the son of the prematurely-deceased Emperor who never was, Caius Germanicus - somewhat better known as Caligula. Suetonius was not among the more widely-read ancient historians in schools and universities, perhaps because his work is rather risqué, but does sometimes appear even in the predominantly classical republican Christ Church, and was the basis of many collections of imperial biographies. Tacitus, whose portrait of Sejanus is deeper and makes a more alarming comparison to Bute, was more widely read than Suetonius. His curious relative absence from the best-known classical curriculum, at Christ Church, is not reflected elsewhere and quite apart from the frequent publication of editions and translations, Tacitus' Histories and Annals (as opposed to his ethnographic Germania) were praised to the skies by Gibbon, and read at Trinity College Dublin, and even

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12 See particularly Monitor: Or, the British Freeholder for 22/5/1762, and 12/6/1762
13 F. Gentleman, Sejanus, a tragedy. As it was intended for the stage (London 1752) and idem. The favourite, an historical tragedy. Dedicated to the Right Honourable John, Earl of Bute (London 1770)
14 Briton, no.1, 29/5/1762, replying to the Monitor no.357 of 22/5/1762.
in Humanity classes in Scotland.

Other prominent ancient individuals are similarly personated on the contemporary political stage; among the more interesting is William Pitt, who was often referred to by his supporters as the English Scipio Africanus, the architect of worldwide victory – a familiar figure to generations reared on Livy's vivid account of the Second Punic War. The Briton devoted a number to refuting this analogy point by point; Pitt was not of high birth and nor were his supporters, so he was unfit to denounce his persecutors as did Scipio, as low-born and turbulent persons. Moreover, Pitt had not commanded in person any of his armies, while Scipio for his part had never appealed to the Mob, changed sides in any political question or deserted his leaders. In a stinging final paragraph, Pitt is instead compared to Scipio's great-nephew Tiberius Gracchus, a rabble-rousing reformer who had famously detested his illustrious ancestor's politics.

Beyond the individual level, more complex analogies to Roman politics occur quite frequently. A whole number of the North Briton (37) is devoted to ‘analysing’ the causes of the decline and fall of the Roman Republic; Wilkes and his colleague Churchill ascribe it to three causes. The first cause is, corruption, in particular the acceptance of bribes by government officials, as happened in Sallust's Bellum Iugurthinum, which is compared to the use of secret funds to push through the Treaty of Utrecht. Second, we have the intimidation of the majority of the political nation by a wealthy minority; the First Triumvirate ruled by controlling the disposition of offices, as Bute seems to be doing, and the present Minister also shows an attachment to Tiberius' motto oderint dum metuant. Finally, Roman decline is ascribed to the rise of proscription as a means of dealing with defeated political rivals. This is to say the least rather awkward as allegory for contemporary English politics; corruption and the excessive power wielded by a rich and well-connected handful are easy enough to see in the politics of any era, but to compare anything happening in 1760s England to the Proscriptions of Sulla or Octavian is purely laughable. Wilkes himself admits that the mass executions of Sulla and Octavian are not quite matched by the mere loss of pensions and places, though he insists the practical political effect is similar as good men fear to antagonise the Ministry.

16 Famously by Bishop Warburton of Gloucester in the advertisement to his Essay on the Doctrine of Grace (London 1762), to which the Briton referred, but also e.g. in Monitor no.228, 1/12/1759
17 Scipio was indeed famous for not demanding a Triumph for his victories in Spain, although the people would have supported his unconstitutional claim to one had he advanced it. Livy, History XXVIII 38.4
18 Briton, 5/2/1763
19 North Briton no.37, 13/2/1763
At around the same time, the *Monitor* in two almost successive issues ascribed to two different causes the collapse of the Roman Republic; on the 19th of February, 1763, it was blamed on failure to look to the integrity of domestic institutions in peacetime, after wars which had entailed a certain amount of laxity with the constitution, so that the ancient Roman constitution was already dying when killed off by Caesar. Three weeks later, the decline was ascribed to militarism, particularly the establishment of a standing army which free, Republican Rome had never had, along with Athens and Sparta. This is arrant nonsense; the Roman Army was effectively a standing force from the early 2nd century BC due to the long periods of service overseas undergone by the citizen soldiers, whilst Sparta has been described as an army with a state attached. This slightly contradictory attitude did not give great credit to the readers' powers of memory, but the connection between excess wealth and national decline is an eminently classical one; Livy dated the decline of Roman morals to the huge amount of loot produced by the defeat of Antiochus III Megas in 194BC.

Livy's explanation has been a commonplace of ancient historians ever since. At the time of publication, it was being advanced in a more scholarly fashion by Rollin's *Roman History*, and partially challenged by Hooke whose revisionist work was just appearing. This focus on decline and fall is in keeping with the generally alarmist tone of the opposition press in 1762-3; English liberty was said to be under existential threat. There could hardly be any greater threat to a civil society than the dramatic collapse of the Roman Republic, unless it was the longer and still more dramatic slide from Empire to the 'dark ages'. The causes and nature of societal decline were perhaps the main issues in the historiography of the Roman Republic in the mid-eighteenth century, with Nathaniel Hooke and Adam Ferguson adopting strongly divergent views. It was discussed around this time in Mackie's lectures, albeit briefly, and the common reading of Sallust at Christ Church later in the decade suggests similar concerns there. It should therefore not shock us to see this debate mirrored in the popular press, albeit in a less scholarly and sophisticated form.

Much less frequently, we find similar analogies to other ancient polities. Several times the

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20 *Monitor*, 19/2/1763, as reproduced in *North Briton Collection* iii (copies of the numbers produced for a few months after publication was suspended in November 1762 are not in most collections of the *Monitor*).
23 The argument that excessive wealth, and its concentration in a small number of hands, was destructive of Republican politics is advanced by Montesquieu and forms the basis of Pocock's “Enlightened Narrative” of the Republic's decline.
papers suggest that if Britain is analogous to a Classical power it is not like Rome but like Carthage, the mercantile and naval superpower set against the land-bound might and endless manpower of France/Rome.  

This is both generally and specifically applicable; in general, it suggests that looking to Rome for examples of how to build and maintain an Empire may be counter-productive, whilst in the specific contest of the Seven Years' War Britain ought to emulate the example of Hannibal and avoid his political masters' mistakes. The major one of those, in the opinion of many strategists down the ages, was that when on a roll of victories and fighting deep in his enemies' territory, with an outside chance of taking Rome itself, Hannibal was recalled to defend the homeland in the hope that peace could then be negotiated. When on a roll, it seemed to the Monitor best to keep rolling, rather than to scramble for peace.

However, the most interesting use of ancient history in this debate is the sharp and unexpected divide over the role of 'the people' in shaping the ancient world. One number of the Briton dismissed Roman politics entirely, as having been chaotic and mob-ridden since the expulsion of the Tarquins 'an uninterrupted scene of tumult and sedition, excited by the illiberal envy, indolence and profligacy of the vulgar, cloaked under the specious name of freedom'. The Auditor presented the popular element to any constitution as inevitably opposing good governance and encouraging demagoguery. To deny that there ever was a Golden Age of Roman civic virtue or political stability is today commonplace, but very surprising to find in 1762; the Auditor's author telescopes the entire Republican period to find his examples of mob-based disorder, skipping from the Secessions of the Plebs to C.Gracchus in a sentence cavalierly covering some 370 years, from 494BC to 132BC. Whilst this is an almost comically exaggerated position, the government papers in general, and unsurprisingly, point to mob rule and popular activism as signs of the fundamental weakness of the late Republic, and paint democratic Athens as an interlude of chaos which was ultimately destructive and can be directly blamed for the long-term decline of that polis.

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24 On the other hand, the Auditor of 16/9/1762 quoted Florus on Carthage in the Third Punic War, never more dangerous than with its back to the wall, with reference to backing the French into a corner where they could not make an honourable peace.

25 However, the Britain/Carthage parallels were acknowledged in The Auditor 21/10/1762 and the opposite conclusion drawn; if Carthage had made peace sooner, with Hannibal still at the gates of Rome, the dramatic defeat could never have happened.

26 Monitor on the articles of peace, 8/1/1763

27 Briton, 11/9/1762

28 Auditor 29/07/1762

29 For a similar attitude to Athens, see W.Mitford, History of Greece (5vols, London 1780-1818) discussed above in ch.3.
The *Auditor* sadly does not go into much detail about this innovative thesis. A case could be made that the popular part of the Roman mixed constitution was on the rise, although it would still be fundamentally flawed. The condemnation of Athens as excessively democratic and prone to fits of popular sentiment is less surprising; save for the vehemence of the denial that the democratic period produced anything worthwhile. Although Socrates, Euripides and the Parthenon could surely be considered a reasonable start, 'faction, animosity, persecution, ingratitude and disquiet' must be acknowledged to have had their downsides.

It may be this disrespect for the commonly-acknowledged merits of classical antiquity that caused the *Auditor* to offer Wilkes the scholarly equivalent of an open goal with a series of rambling remarks on how the Romans never drank toasts on political subjects or talked politics at parties, which was a Gothic habit. Extensive quotation from Tacitus' *Germania* did not mask the fact that this was entirely inaccurate and Wilkes had a lot of fun pointing out the following week that his rival could be confuted by the *Disticha Catonis*, a collection of proverbs used for teaching the elements of grammar to small boys, and by Horace. Furthermore, Wilkes continued, the *Auditor*'s author had not even addressed the incomparable civilisation of Greece, doubtless because he, the *Auditor*, was too ignorant, also because Greek examples blatantly contradicted the *Auditor*'s assertion that toast-drinking was Gothic in origin. Wilkes is laying claim to a deeper and broader classical learning than the pseudo-intellectual *Auditor* (not the most difficult task) and thus to greater fitness to be read and heeded.

Wilkes was well-placed to make such claims; although his university education was relatively brief, he spent a considerable proportion of it at Leiden, where history, both ancient and modern, was considered the foundation of the arts curriculum and taught intensively. Leiden was the origin of the tradition of teaching universal history and classical antiquities as foundations for Law, which we have seen in operation at Edinburgh. The *North Briton* here draws on three related classical topics: general narratives of rise and decline, antiquarian detail about social customs, and the history of the Roman Empire, which was relatively little studied in England compared to the Republic. Although Wilkes was not the only author of the *North Briton*, it is interesting to see the strengths in ancient history of the Leiden curriculum mirrored so in his work. Whilst Wilkes' main interest in classics was in poetry and he edited

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30 *Auditor* 2/9/1762  
31 *North Briton* no.15, 11/9/1762  
Catullus late in life, he was effective in turning a classical allusion to his advantage and never more so, as will appear in the next chapter, than when the opposition said something ill-informed to set him up.

On the other side, the Monitor is rather shockingly extreme in the light it sheds on the ancient world. It wholeheartedly adopts the cause of the plebs of Rome as that of the people of 1760s England. Marie Peters has identified the Monitor as an antecedent of British radicalism, but she understates the degree of that radicalism. The active role of the Roman people in politics is praised repeatedly and uncritically, with the troubles blamed on the depredations of rogue aristocrats; the Monitor however is characteristically more vague on whether the rogues were isolated bad apples or the necessary products of an oligarchy. In direct contrast to the Auditor, the late Republic is presented as a time of growing oligarchic power, as the oligarchs grew rich and purchased increasing degrees of political power. Whilst the Monitor acknowledges that popular politics can be tumultuous, this is a fair price to pay for the access of liberty and national glory. Even popular rebellion, says the Monitor, could and therefore presumably still can be considered legitimate; the Secessions of the Plebs were noble and worthwhile, and the mobs which supported the Gracchi only did so because their legitimate grievances were neglected by a tyrannical oligarchy.

Considering the condemnation with which commentators ancient and modern tended to treat popular revolt, this goes much further than expressing admiration for the directly democratic element of the mixed constitution. If the people of the Roman Empire's capital had a right to revolt for redress of their and their representatives' grievances, the capital of the British Empire must surely have the same right. The Briton mocked this attitude in condescending style, with a mock announcement that the City of London was to arrogate to itself all the privileges of the old Imperial capitals, with the Mayor of London ruling the whole Empire. The most surprising thing about this is how near it is to what the Monitor was actually saying; except for the reference to the 'mob-ility' of the London liverymen, and an attack on William Beckford as a slave-holding autocrat, it could almost fit in as a semi-serious suggestion. The Monitor's main constituency is, not coincidentally, described by Bob Harris as the anti-ministerial interest in the City of London – comparisons to the Senate of Rome would

33 Peters, 'The “Monitor” on the constitution,' p.711
34 Monitor 16/10/1762 and 17/3/1763
35 Monitor 30/10/1762
36 Briton 13/11/1762
certainly have been calculated to flatter the readership.\textsuperscript{37}

The \textit{Monitor's} calls for popular power would have been dangerous to make. They came just months before the arrest of a newspaper contributor on charges of treason, and made an argument which, put more plainly and without the safer setting of a distant time and place, could certainly be construed as treasonable in itself. The use of a Roman cover for such radicalism offers an obvious if paper-thin defence in the event of official retribution. Yet it is only effective because the authors can assume that their intended audience – largely educated and urban – understand precisely what is intended. It would not need a very deep knowledge of Roman antiquities, as delivered in a number of schoolboys' histories as well as the lectures of an English Scott or Scottish Hill, to grasp the essential point that the Roman Republic had originally been ruled as a city-state and dominated by the city's local institutions. The response from the \textit{Briton} clearly shows that the writers on the other side of the debate had got the message.

However, once Wilkes returned from his French exile and the debate moved on to his 'incapacity' to sit in Parliament, the classical element to the discourse vanishes completely. In all of the debate over Wilkes' imprisonment and exclusion there is no sign of reference to other times or places; it is exclusively English in focus. This seems odd, given the extensive classical grounding of the previous debates, and the fact that there are many interesting classical precedents for Wilkes' situation. The Roman Senate had officials specifically for the purpose of expelling unsuitable members: the Censors, who were elected from the eldest and most experienced members.\textsuperscript{38} Quite a number of members were removed at every quintennial \textit{lustrum}, for misdemeanours including drunkenness, debt, criminal convictions, taking bribes and most anything else any politician could find to do wrong. However, there was no permanent expulsion, save by being sent into exile for truly serious crimes. Several prominent Senators were expelled from the Senate and worked their way back up to the highest office. Publius Lentulus Sura, ex-aedile, was expelled as a chronic debtor, and had risen again from the back benches to be praetor before he got involved in Catiline's rebellion and was executed in 63 BC. Cicero's fellow consul in the same year, C. Antonius Hybrida, had also come back from being expelled.\textsuperscript{39}

\textsuperscript{37} B. Harris, \textit{Politics and the Nation: Britain in the mid-eighteenth century} (Oxford 2002) p.68
\textsuperscript{38} Oxford Classical Dictionary, "Censors."
\textsuperscript{39} Pliny, \textit{Natural History} viii. 213
Wilkes' self-presentation has been explored by several of his biographers, particularly Peter Thomas in *John Wilkes, A Friend to Liberty*, who considers him to have deliberately placed himself in a tradition of English radicalism, walking as close as possible to, but not across, the edge of the Pale.\(^40\) Although the radical movement in general could use foreign and classical examples, as an individual within it Wilkes' strategy was to keep to a simpler message on the Liberties of Englishmen.

Therefore none of this apparently fertile field of ancient precedent seems to have made any impression on the issue of Wilkes' exclusion. One possibility is that neither side could possibly consider the relevant precedents good ones. The government would have had to admit that the Romans had always allowed the reelection of expelled Senators, explicitly because the people had the right to elect any qualified person as one of their senators.\(^41\) On the other hand, most of the expelled whose stories have come down to us are not exactly satisfying reading, even for a desperate propagandist. The office of Censor was so well-respected by ancient authors that they present the ranks of the censured as a very bad lot indeed; with Wilkes already known as 'Colonel Cataline'; comparing his case to that of one of the historical Catiline's co-conspirators would be a curious rhetorical strategy at best, particularly as absolutely every educated man would be familiar with the general story. Unlike the confusion which could arise, as we shall see, over the Punic Wars or episodes in Thucydidides, there could be little scope for creative interpretation of the details.

However, the unhelpful nature of the most relevant examples is not sufficient explanation. The debates of 1762-3 were, at bottom, quite general in nature. Other than the specific question of the peace treaty, there were few definite questions of policy at stake. Rather, there were questions of character, and of the general 'feel' of the government, a sense rather than definite examples of oppression *in potentia*. This sort of general issue was where the necessarily broad and inexact classical example or analogy could be most politically effective. By contrast, the debates in 1769-70 over Wilkes' expulsion from Parliament were highly specific; there was one burning question, whether Wilkes could be expelled and excluded from his seat or not. This was contested in a very specific manner; Wilkes chose to fight it as a question not of universal principle, but of the rights of the English electorate. He wrote his own pamphlets to those who had elected him, arguing in terms of the law of England and the rights of


\(^{41}\) Plutarch, *Cicero* 17.

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Englishmen. To such a narrowly-defined question, classical matter could not be relevant. The pattern of Greek and Roman history being used to support general positions, but seldom successfully for arguing narrow points, is one that is seen further in the following chapters.

A further possible explanation lies in the nature of Wilkes' audience in the incapacity debate. The status of classical education as a mark of gentility cuts both ways. When Wilkes was trying to appeal to a non-elite audience, the craftsmen and even the 'mob' of London rather than their political leaders who read the *North Briton*, a less high-flown register was appropriate. Whilst ancient history, like almost all the interactions discussed in this section, belonged firmly to elite culture, Wilkes' election and re-election in Middlesex was couched by him and his followers as an appeal to the masses to defend their rights which, to the London mob, had nothing to do with Greece or Rome. The next chapter will discuss political discourse entirely within an elite sphere, in the form of debates in Parliament. There, the last reason for omitting ancient history discussed here would not apply, as all MPs were supposed to be gentlemen, even more so than the regular readers of the political press.

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42 Cash, *John Wilkes* pp.246-53
Chapter 11 - Parliamentary Rhetoric and the American Question

At the peak of the 'public life' for which universities were expected to prepare their students was service in Parliament. The sons of the aristocracy were, compared to 'the upper classes' in general, disproportionately represented in both the universities and the House of Commons, and around two-fifths of members of Parliament had spent some time at university. There were a good number of genuine classical scholars among them – to take a couple of famous examples, Lord North was a fine Latinist, and John Wilkes edited Theophrastus and, perhaps inevitably for that famous libertine, Catullus. Parliament was often referred to as a, or the, Senate, raising echoes of Roman statecraft and liberty – most noticeably in thinly-anonymised press accounts of debates before reporting on Parliament became de facto accepted, such as Samuel Johnson's 'reports from the Senate of Lilliput' for the Gentleman's Magazine in the early 1740s.

A member of Parliament was expected to be a gentleman, and a classical education was a key element of that status – Anthony Fletcher has written at length on Latinity as a marker of élite status. Demonstrating a facility with classical learning allowed a speaker to reinforce his own claim to membership of the governing class, and challenge that of his 'ignorant' opponents. Ancient history was a particularly fruitful area for this kind of claim because, as well as being an unquestionably gentlemanly field of knowledge acquired through education at elite schools and universities as well as through leisureed reading, it was often directly relevant to the matters being discussed. The model of the Roman Senator as the ideal legislator, drawn from the eulogistic portraits of Livy and Polybius, was thus a powerful and satisfying one for British politicians to adopt. Similarly, the parallels between the British and Roman empires, and the situation of the Senate and Parliament as metropolitan, sovereign councils, both aristocratic and democratic in character, encouraged parliamentarians to draw on ancient models and precedents in debate. A relatively broad-based study of debates in Parliament here brings together a variety of traditions of classical education from universities across Britain and beyond, and shows them being put to use in practice. Both differences and similarities in educational background are highlighted by the kind of material drawn on. Overall the utility of knowledge of ancient history as a tool in debate is clearly evident, and

43 G.McCracken, 'John Wilkes, Humanist' in Philological Quarterly no.4 (1923); P.Whiteley, Lord North: the prime minister who lost America (London 1996) p.8
44 A.Fletcher, Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800 (London 1995) p.354
45 The dual aristocratic/democratic nature of the Senate is explored by Catherine Steel in 'The Legacy of the Roman Republican Senate' in The Classical Receptions Journal vol.7 (2015) p.7
mirrors many of the authors, periods and issues most commonly taught and discussed in universities.

The question of the liberties of the American colonies and the duties that they owed to Parliament was a central issue in British politics for thirty years: from the Seven Years’ War, when Canada was conquered on the banks of the Elbe, as Pitt put it, to the signing of the Peace of Paris in 1783 and the ensuing recriminations in government. The reasons for the debate and conflict, the justifications on both sides and the larger context of an evolving empire and state have been exhaustively covered by many eminent authors and thus may be largely omitted here.

However, less attention has been paid to the debate within Parliament itself. Perhaps still under the influence of Lewis Namier and his insistence that there was no genuine sense of ideology or party in British politics, correspondence and back-room manoeuvres have been studied exhaustively and often speculatively, but there is much less focus on debate, whether the cut and thrust of the Commons or the more dignified rumbling of the Lords. In the aftermath of Namier's prosopographical approach, focus shifted toward explorations of politics outside Parliament in a wider public sphere, where, although there is a role for public speech of various kinds, deliberative oratory is rarely among them. Interestingly, Namier's prosopography and that of Ronald Syme on the last years of the Roman Republic were exact contemporaries in the 1930s and informed one another's approaches – an example of relatively recent scholars drawing direct parallels between the élite societies of Republican Rome and Augustan England.

Some twenty-one MPs' speeches are discussed in this chapter. Of the twenty-one, only three definitely did not attend a university, whilst one more probably did not. Of the remaining sixteen, seven attended Oxford, four Edinburgh, three Cambridge, and two each Trinity


47 L. Namier & J. Brooke (eds.) The House of Commons 1754-1790 (3vols, London 1964) barely mentions in its long introductory survey (pp.1-204) the actual debates in the Commons, concentrating on prosopography and the means outside the chamber by which ministers maintained their hold over votes; more recent works have expanded on extra-parliamentary influences on members and public politics in general, but that discourse is seen in the press, not in the House of Commons itself.


49 R. Syme, The Roman Revolution (London 1939) appeared after Namier's Structure of British Politics and extended Namier's focus on kinship and clientelism as driving political forces to the Roman world, modifying based on Namier's ideas the influential German concept of the “aristocratic clan” (Adelspartei) in the Roman world.
Dublin and Leiden. One, Charles Adam, spent three years each at Oxford and Edinburgh, and George Dempster as well as Edinburgh spent a year each at St Andrew's and the Academie Royale de Bruxelles. The English colleges represented are Christ Church (4 plus a dubious claim to Temple Simon Luttrell), Trinity Cambridge (3), University College (2) and Trinity Oxford (1). By contrast, only about two-fifths of the House of Commons as a whole from 1754-90 had attended a university; the figure did not exceed a half until 1818. Quite apart from the couple of cases in which we can draw a direct connection between something a particular member said, and something we know he personally studied at university, the figures above suggest a correlation between the willingness to draw on the ancient world in debate and university learning. A similar breakdown is evident with the Lords.50

The speeches discussed are not claimed to have been selected in a systematic, statistically-determined manner; they are a necessarily impressionistic collection of examples, taken from incomplete and uneven sources, which seem to make use of ancient history in interesting or unexpected ways, or seem to exemplify a particular way of engaging with the classical past. They are not the 'most sophisticated' such examples, nor the only ones even in the range of debates covered. However, they were not selected with any particular attention to the names or backgrounds of the MPs or peers concerned, so there is no reason to expect the breakdown above is not representative of which MPs were most likely to draw on ancient history in debate – those with a university education.

Two figures appear particularly often in the following pages, representing important traditions in classical education. Edmund Burke, undoubtedly the most famous parliamentary orator of his day, was distinguished by his deep and broad classical learning. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin in the 1740s, a period for which we know the university curriculum in detail, and know it to have been heavily weighted towards ancient history on the Classical side – the same period produced other respected parliamentarians who appear in this chapter, not least the redoubtable Colonel Isaac Barre, better known as a veteran of Wolfe's Canadian campaign, and a good orator with a famously aggressive style.51 Whilst it was perfectly possible for a gentleman to be a first-rate Classicist without a university education, Burke represents a shining example of the 'training for public affairs' at university apparently succeeding in doing precisely what it was supposed to.

50 For further discussion of the problems inherent in drawing definitive conclusions from the available records of debates, see below, pp.251-2.
51 L. Namier & J. Brooke (eds), The House of Commons 1754-1790 (3vols London 1964) ii 51 for Barre.
A more obscure recurring name in this chapter is that of Luttrell – Henry, Temple and James Luttrell were the sons of Simon Luttrell, Earl of Carhampton in the Irish peerage. Henry spent much of his life as an MP in between periods of active service in the Army; Temple and James just one stormy term from 1774-80. Henry and Temple were educated at Westminster School; Henry proceeded to Christ Church and spent around three years there without taking a degree, from 1755 to 1757. It is quite possible that Temple did likewise – in those very early days of Gregory's rule at Christ Church aristocratic students often resided briefly without matriculating, as his reforms imposing college discipline on them had not yet taken effect. Regardless, Temple Luttrell was known for including in his speeches a great variety of classical allusions, as well as intemperate attacks on Lord North's administration, the vigour of which cost him his seat in 1780. If ancient history could be a subversive study, Temple Luttrell could be a perfect example for his intemperate use of classical allusions and examples, described by John Brooke in the *History of Parliament* as 'a foundation of cant, taken from Burke, decorated with threats and abuse … long, repetitious and boring, padded out with classical comparisons and historical disquisitions.' This judgement appears to be Brooke's own, though he quotes Walpole as considering Temple Luttrell excessively violent and abusive in his manner. It is unfortunate that the Luttrells fall in the period at Christ Church where we know least about students' reading, when the collections records show only a minimal and generic list, rather than the comprehensive individual records available for the 1710s and from 1770 onwards. However, Gregory was credited by his biographer with overseeing the revival of history in the college, and the Luttrells were certainly well-versed in Roman history on the evidence of their debate performances, whether acquired at Westminster or Christ Church.

We might also consider a couple of other figures, perhaps less prominent in debate or as classical scholars but still significant in their connection to both. Walter Stanhope stands high among these. He was educated at University College Oxford, where his letters are important

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53 Anon. *Essay on the Life of David Gregory, late Dean of Christ Church* (London, 1769) p.22 mentions that Gregory obliged noblemen's sons to show evidence of their studies and encouraged them to go through university formalities, including matriculation.


55 See ch.5 pp.122-7

56 *Essay on the Life of David Gregory* p.19
evidence for the teaching of the college's brief flowering under the Senior Tutorship of William Scott, who was himself briefly an MP and brother to a future Lord Chancellor. Stanhope was keenly interested in ancient history as a student, and we occasionally find Stanhope, MP, throwing a classical allusion into his either brief or underreported speeches. Lord North was considered a good Latinist, both in his youth at Trinity College and as an elder statesman. Although his slow, heavy, ponderously direct manner of speaking did not lend itself to classicism, we find in a contemporary memoir a marvellous anecdote of the elderly North, apparently asleep, 'waking up' to correct Burke on points of antiquarian detail and Latin grammar in the House.57

William Adam, one of the relatively small number of Scots in the Commons, was educated at both Edinburgh and Christ Church. Although he made few speeches and fewer classical references, he did make one notable point about the limitations of Greek and Roman liberty, which echoed Ferguson's famous passage in the Essay on the History of Civil Society about the alienness of Classical Athens as well as William Mitford's criticisms of Athenian democracy – he would have been taught by Ferguson at Edinburgh, and missed being a contemporary of Mitford at Oxford by two years.58 Henry Dundas, the most powerful of the Scottish MPs as Lord Advocate and political 'manager' of Scotland, was himself an Edinburgh graduate and Scottish advocate of the same vintage as Adam. As such, we know he would have been expected to study Roman Antiquities. It is thus unsurprising to see him looking to the example of the Roman dictatorship to justify extreme measures in a crisis.59

Petr Ihalainen's valuable study Agents of the People, a comparison of debates in Parliament and the Swedish Estates, discusses the evolution of 'democracy' as a concept in parliamentary discourse. The author notes that 'Parliamentary discourse ... has never been systematically surveyed. Most studies of British political history make extensive reference ... without paying attention to rhetorical qualities', arguing that further study of the topic is essential, but confines himself strictly to the emergence of 'the People' as a legitimate part of politics.60 Its unique value is more in its approach than in its conclusions; Ihalainen is one of a mere handful of scholars to look seriously and systematically at parliamentary debate in recent years.

58 For Adam's speech see below p.246
59 See below pp.228-9
60 P.Ihalainen Agents of the People: Democracy and Popular Sovereignty in British and Swedish Parliamentary and public debates, 1734-1800 (Boston, MA, 2010) p.28
This lacuna seems to originate in problems with the available sources. Newspaper reports of debates were uncommon before the 1760s, and 'Strangers' were excluded, albeit inconsistently from major debates from 1770 to 1777 expressly to prevent reporting. There was no official record of debates other than sparse, formal minutes. Reports of debates were published in the London press, but were subject to occasional and unpredictable suppression, both lawsuits against publishers and, more commonly, the exercise of the right of any member at any time to clear the Strangers' Gallery of spectators. For this reason, most press reports were more or less perfunctorily anonymised before the early 1760s, and even after that they were based on imperfect sources. Whilst they can be relied upon for the basic viewpoints of an accurate list of speakers, there is debate over how far supposedly full or even verbatim reports can be trusted. Samuel Johnson's days as a parliamentary 'reporter' in the 1740s have probably done more than anything to discredit the contemporary press; he famously claimed to have composed a particularly fiery speech in his garret, without ever visiting the debate. The various volumes of collected parliamentary debates are drawn from contemporary press reports, and do not pretend to cover every debate or to offer verbatim reports – whole sessions go by with barely a speech, especially before the 1770s. Certain individual speeches or passages of debate were published in pamphlet form; William Pitt especially had several speeches published in this fashion, and several MPs were known to send copies of their speeches, or sometimes what they wished their speeches had said, to journalists and pamphleteers.

Thomas and Simmons in *Proceedings and Debates of the British Parliament Regarding North America* have however shown Dr Johnson to have been in a minority, or perhaps superseded by more reliable reporters. Their exhaustive comparison of sources for anything regarding America in Parliament has been invaluable to this study and has shown that by the 1770s, when reporting became far more consistent and widespread, press reports in the major dailies and weeklies tallied very closely with one another and with manuscript sources as to both the

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67 Thomas, *House of Commons* pp.203-4
content and phrasing of speeches.

Reports of debates written by members for their own diaries or the benefit of friends outside London are more trustworthy, as we do at least know they were written by members who were personally present for the debate in question, but generally less comprehensive. Foremost among these is the shorthand record kept by Sir Henry Cavendish of almost every debate in the period 1768-74, and never published in full – his 1842 editor amended liberally, inconsistently and occasionally incomprehensibly to ‘improve’ speeches.  

Although Simmons and Thomas have published extensive extracts of the diaries, their text focuses narrowly on debates explicitly concerning American matters. As Ihalainen has noted, debates of the period tended to wander far from the ostensible topic, and until a scholarly edition of the whole is published the originals in the British Library are an essential complement to the less comprehensive printed reports.

Other important parliamentary diaries include those of Nathaniel Ryder and of course the extensive and well-known oeuvre of Horace Walpole, covering over 40 years of parliamentary life, albeit not always first-hand. The latter is particularly valuable, although problematic, because it includes extensive comments on the general style and delivery of particular speakers. Although Walpole is fairly universally cited, it is interesting how little use has been made of some of the other diarists; Ihalainen does not use the diaries at all, confining himself to printed reports.

Appeals to the precedent and example of the ancient world are common in Parliamentary discourse of the period, both in set-piece speeches and in more free-flowing debate, and may be roughly divided into several categories as follows: first, the simple personal analogy between a contemporary individual and a famous figure from the Classical world; second, analogies to a particular ancient historical situation which treat the ancient world and contemporary Britain as fundamentally similar, blending naturally into a third category where they are treated as fundamentally different and classical references explicitly considered insufficient or irrelevant. Three further issues may be useful to look at in the American debates; we might consider the use of Greek or Roman models of colonisation, at the idea of mores or national characters ancient and modern, and finally at how the use of ancient history

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67 Simmons & Thomas, Debates respecting North America iv (iv-vi)
fits into different models of rhetorical style and theories of persuasion.

12.1 Personal analogies

Examples of the first category, the simple comparison of personalities, are common. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the villains of the ancient world receive more attention than the heroes, and the Government more than the opposition; after all, ministers were far more likely to have actually done something of potential historical significance. Perhaps for obvious reasons, Lord North, as a leading government spokesman in the House of Commons and then as prime minister, came in for a lot of these comparisons in person. Among others, he was compared to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Xerxes, the aged, worn-out Pericles and Demosthenes. His administration in general added Catiline, Caligula and Cinna to the list.

The reference to Cinna offers a fine case in point of the simplest, and most ill-thought-out, of classical allusions. A wide-ranging debate in the House of Lords 'On the Papers Laid before the House relating to the Situation of America' in 1770 included the following attack by Lord Shelburne, who had left Christ Church after one year to fight in the Seven Years War, on the administration.

My lords, I scarcely remember a period in history ancient or modern when the ministers of a state however dead to feelings of justice were so lost to the sentiments of shame that they gloried in their delinquency, and deemed it meritorious to be detested by every sensible, and every honest, individual of their nation. This pinnacle of profligacy was reserved for the present ministers … who have adopted the principle of the Roman tyrant as well as they were able, and if our heads were beyond their power, have at least cut off all our liberties with one blow.70

The allusion is to a remark attributed to Caligula by Suetonius, that he wished the Roman people had but one neck, so he could execute them all with one stroke.71 Other than stating that the ministry are oppressive villains, the comparison is not obvious, nor is it immediately obvious what the 'blow' is – despite the title of the debate, and Shelburne's speech beginning with discussion of the latest petitions from the colonies, it seems to refer to the exclusion of

70 Cobbett, Parliamentary History xvi col.1028
71 Suetonius, Twelve Caesars 'Gaius Caligula' 30
Wilkes from the House of Commons. The confusion is not helped by the fact that the report, which Cobbett reproduced from the *London Magazine*, is not very good at distinguishing between debates, or sometimes speakers.

The reference to Catiline is also connected to Wilkes, who was famously nicknamed 'Colonel Cataline' (*sic*) by the pro-government press in the 1760s (see previous chapter). By 1775, restored to the Commons, he was able to mock his detractors in a stirring if dramatically overblown speech, demanding that the administration reveal the names of 'the authors of all American measures'. Presumably some previous speaker had revived Wilkes' old nickname, because after a brief summary of what his motion is requesting he launches forth into the following extended comparison between the Catilinarian conspirators and the North administration, whose actions he claims fit the characterisation offered by Cicero and Sallust far better than his own.

Sir, there are no Catalines on this side of the House … [but] in that sanguinary phalanx which has during all the evolutions and revolutions of government for several years past remained unshaken and impregnable; in them and in the composition of their principles I see many Catalinarian elements; an insatiate thirst for riches; a licentious pursuit after power; dominion to be acquired by the most desperate hazards and the most savage enterprises; by the burning of whole towns, the habitations of men, the temples of the Divinity; innocent families to be butchered, and the entire demolition of the commonwealth at her halcyon zenith of peace, harmony and abundance. Whether or not midst the arcana of their cabinet they, like the Cataline-junto, pass from lip to lip the chalice filled with human blood, as a pledge of secrecy and cooperative zeal, and to 'rivet them to coercion' is best known among themselves, but if one may judge by the diabolical creeds which they have not scrupled to avow, such may be their sacrament.

The *escalatio* here would have delighted Cicero; the spiralling severity of charges echoes the perorations to several of Cicero's speeches, particularly those against Catiline himself:

> With these omens, O Catiline, be gone to your impious and nefarious war, to the great safety of the republic, to your own misfortune and injury, and to the destruction of those who have joined themselves to you in every wickedness

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72 Most modern authors prefer 'Catiline' – as with other classical names I have not modernised usage in direct quotation but otherwise employ modern spellings and transliterations.

73 Almon, *Parliamentary Register* iii 215-6
and atrocity.\textsuperscript{74}

It would be reasonable to call many of politicians greedy, ambitious and unprincipled; certainly it would be expected of a prominent member of the opposition. Accusations of arson, murder, treason and cannibalism might perhaps be considered unparliamentary language. The last line, conditional though it is, takes the accusation a step beyond Cicero's wildest flights; the original conspirators were accused of drinking human blood so they would put themselves wholly outside society, reliant only on one another, rather than out of any positive principle or religious devotion. By describing the practice as 'their sacrament' Wilkes accuses the administration of potential paganism or even Satanism, somewhat ironic coming from a founder member of the Hellfire Club to a pillar of the Church of England.

Along with Wilkes' press-bestowed nickname, the common practice of authors and journalists adopting classical pseudonyms also received several airings in Parliament. Probably the best example comes from Edmund Burke, who in arguing against the Boston Port Bill reminded the House that '[in] the public papers you will see Cinna and a thousand other Roman names, throwing their invectives and tarring and feathering all who oppose this Bill.'\textsuperscript{75} Whilst the pro-government press did support the Port Bill in strong language, and many wrote under pseudonyms, it would be unlikely for a government writer to adopt the identity of Cinna, a popularist politician of the early first century BC who remains relatively obscure despite being consul four times. He is remembered mainly for switching sides in the war between Marius and Sulla, for being murdered by his disgruntled troops, and for being one of Julius Caesar's fathers-in-law. Indeed, someone who had actually read up on Cinna might not expect to find him supporting the Boston Port Bill; one of the few political principles associated with his name is support for the towns of Italy in their claim to full Roman citizenship and political rights. This is a rare slip of classical knowledge on the part of Burke, who would have read about Cinna in Velleius Paterculus and Cicero at Trinity College Dublin, but was presumably thinking of Cinna's reputation for harshness, fickleness and treachery.\textsuperscript{76}

Attempts to compliment someone by comparing them to a great classical figure were, perhaps understandably, rarer and usually came with a sting. It is here that the patchy nature of debate reports begins to be frustrating, as often we have only one side of what was clearly a contested

\textsuperscript{74} Cicero, \textit{Catilinarian Orations} I.33 (translation from Perseus Online Classical Library \url{http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0019%3Atext%3DCatil.%3Aspeech%3D1%3Achapter%3D13%3Asection%3D33} accessed 7/7/2014)

\textsuperscript{75} \textit{London Evening Post}, 29/3/1774

\textsuperscript{76} For the TCD Classics curriculum in Burke's day, see above, Chapter 4, pp.95-7
exchange centring on a classical reference. A Bill introduced by Edmund Burke 'To Compass the American Troubles' in November 1775, was opposed by Solicitor-General Wedderburn on behalf of the government; he is described as having 'defended the Administration in a fine vein of oratory,' perhaps aided by the fact the training he had received as a law student at Edinburgh whilst Adam Smith was lecturing on rhetoric and belles-lettres. Burke's speech is quoted at length, but for reasons that will become apparent, clearly not in full. The report of Wedderburn's speech continues as follows:

And in answer to an observation of Mr Burke on the conduct of Demosthenes he entered upon classical ground, and with a consummate eloquence and accuracy of recollection, decanted upon the history of that period, with allusion to the present times. His speech was a restoration to the House; and though it was three o'clock in the morning, awakened the attention of every man in it.\footnote{Almon, \textit{Parliamentary Register} iii 195}

There is no mention in the longer report of Burke's speech of Demosthenes, but it is logical to suppose the reference is to his vacillating attempts to make peace between Athens and Philip II of Macedon, where defiant rhetoric alternated with periods of abject incapability. It would at the time have been familiar material; Thomas Leland's very popular biography of Philip II had just been published, and Demosthenes was increasingly coming to be read in schools and universities.\footnote{See discussion of Leland in ch.4 above, and of the eighteenth-century interest in the fourth century BC in the second half of ch.3.} This is an interesting example of the relevant plasticity of Greek history compared to Roman, especially Rome before the last days of the Republic, down to perhaps 60 BC and the establishment of the First Triumvirate. In the case of Rome, there is generally a single narrative; the received opinion of the vast majority of events and figures is clear and one-sided; agreeing on heroes or villains, positive or negative events. To borrow from Sellar and Yateeman in \textit{1066 and All That}, almost everything in Roman history is either a Good or a Bad Thing, a binary view perhaps inherited from reading simplistic primers of Roman history and Livy's rather black-and-white early books at an impressionable age. Revisionist critiques of Republican Rome, questioning the validity of these simplistic interpretations, were hinted at by authors of the eighteenth century, or even earlier, but did not become mainstream until the twentieth century.\footnote{Adam Ferguson, for example, questioned the 'civilisation' of the ancient world, saying Athens or Rome would seem barbaric to modern eyes; A. Ferguson, \textit{Essay on the History of Civil Society} (Edinburgh 1762) pp.325-7 Nathaniel Hooke questioned whether "republican liberty" had been more than a charade covering aristocratic tyranny. Even in Parliament William Adam, who had attended Edinburgh and Oxford and trained in both Scottish and English law, argued, in 1780, that "the liberty of ancient times was narrow and confined"; in a speech which will be discussed later; Cobbett, \textit{Parliamentary History}, xxi col.507}
actually bore any resemblance to Pyrrhus of Epirus, but rather less about what a resemblance to Pyrrhus might mean. With Greece, where there is seldom one authoritative source for any period, and the level of general knowledge would be much, much lower, there was more scope for disputing not just claims to a classical legacy, but what that legacy meant.

The Crown was far from being immune to unflattering comment, and the rogues' gallery of ancient rulers provided plentiful sources of comparison. This was noticed by serious scholars and educators; see for example Dugald Stewart's remarks to his moral philosophy class, that all modern history could show no tyrants quite so vile as Nero, Tiberius and Caligula, as well as by popular commentators such as the anonymous correspondent of the Monitor who came to grief comparing George III to Tiberius.  

In universities, as in general historiography, the provision of personal examples was still seen as a major function of history, despite the approach of new, 'philosophic' ways of understanding the past. The personal analogy in debate, while to modern eyes appearing crude and an unsophisticated use of the classical past, is thus reflective of a way of understanding the value of history, and particularly ancient history, which stretched back centuries. Ancient history was much used in this fashion in schools and books for schoolboys especially, as well as in works aimed at an adult audience such as Rollin's Roman History and in the university reading of figures such as John James.

Parliamentary discourse had to observe a slightly greater degree of reverence, and it is interesting to note that one of the relatively rare appearances of George III as a person, distinct from his administration, in the American debates was a complimentary classical allusion from an inveterate supporter of the opposition. In the course of a long speech in the 1776 debate on the King's Speech, Temple Luttrell excoriated the government in a range of classical allusions, but in the middle gave the King himself an altogether more generous treatment.

When news was brought to Argesilaus, King of Sparta, during a civil war in Greece, that a bloody fight had happened near the city of Corinth, but that the Spartans were victorious, and the number of their troops killed was inconsiderable, compared with the loss of the enemy, instead of exultations of joy, that wise and humane monarch cried out with a deep sigh 'Oh unhappy Greece! To have slain so many of the

80 Monitor, 22/5/1762, and D.Stewart, Complete Works (9vols, London 1855) ix 401, discussed above ch.9 p.190
81 On exempla in schools, see p.26, on books for young readers, pp.34-5, Rollin, pp.42-3, and James p.120
best warriors with thine own hand, who had they lived might have proved a match for all the barbarians in the world!"\textsuperscript{82}

This, Luttrell suggests, was the King's private reaction to the news of the Battle of Long Island; it is to be regretted that his ministers did not share it. Compare, six pages later, the reaction attributed by the same speaker to the Earl of Sandwich.

From what accursed examples our present system of politics is drawn, I am at a loss to discover … unless it be met with in the memoirs of Dionysus, tyrant of Syracuse. Sir, that monster, being determined upon the ruin of a free people of Reggio, imposed upon them certain exactions with which he was persuaded they had not the wherewithal to comply – hence he founded a pretext to invest their territory with a formidable army; after a gallant and desperate resistance they were reduced to an unconditional surrender: Dionysius then laid their city in ashes; condemned many of the citizens to cruel tortures and sold the rest for slaves by beat of drum in a public market place. How happy, Sir, would it make that mirror of all good qualities, our First Lord of Admiralty, were he appointed drummer at the city of New York.\textsuperscript{83}

Separating the King from his advisors so as to avoid directly criticising the monarch is so common a rhetorical trope as to be nearly universal since, at a conservative estimate, the first monarch first mildly upset some of his people; the trope occurs, inter alia, in the first pentad of Livy and the Book of Chronicles. The contrast between the two in such proximity is, however, striking. Argesilaus, in the Peloponnesian Wars, recognises that a civil war is a dead loss to the Greek people whatever the outcome, whereas Dionysius, like the Earl of Sandwich, sees the opposition purely as a conquered people, a resource for the victors. This distinction would not necessarily be persuasive in the abstract – many on the government benches and some of the opposition did feel that the Americans had removed themselves from the community of the realm – and reference to English history might have been unfortunate for other reasons. The meanings of the Civil War were by no means universally agreed-upon, whilst for Luttrell's purposes the Glorious Revolution and older, medieval English conflicts were too straightforwardly black-and-white, whereas the histories of Greece and Syracuse were safely neutral political ground. They were also sufficiently obscure as to represent a superior claim to expertise of which many rivals would be little aware – Thucydides in the 1770s was only beginning to be regularly taught in universities, principally Oxford and Trinity College Dublin, neither of which had regularly read him twenty years earlier.

\textsuperscript{82} Almon, Parliamentary Register v 19
\textsuperscript{83} Ibid. v 23
A clearer example of the back-handed compliment may be found in Wilkes' comparison of Lord Cornwallis to Julius Caesar, introduced in a debate on a vote of thanks to Generals Cornwallis and Clinton in 1780. Whilst Cobbett's report does not have any earlier reference to Caesar, that does not mean there was none – Wilkes delighted in picking up an unwise allusion and twisting it to his own rhetorical ends. Regardless, it is either taken up or introduced by Wilkes in the following passage, which broadens the field of debate from the merely military to introduce Caesar's political as well as his military character.

I do not mean to derogate from the high heroic courage and superior military virtues of Lord Cornwallis. I admire the splendour and brilliance of those qualities which dazzle in my countryman as they did in Julius Caesar, and I equally lament that they are called forth to action in the same bad and mischievous cause; the attempt to overturn the liberties of his country. The Roman too possessed as the honourable gentleman says of Lord Cornwallis 'nice and delicate sentiments of honour and valour.' He was certainly an accomplished gentleman, perhaps the most accomplished of any in the history of mankind, but he carried on a wicked war against the constitution of the free country in which he was born, and therefore under the deepest obligation to support. In the same light I consider the war … in North America.\(^{84}\)

This has some similarities to Wilkes' earlier attack on the administration discussed above. Again, the comparison is over the top and lends a fairly ordinary debate an epochal, almost mythic quality, placing Cornwallis on a level with 'perhaps the most accomplished gentleman in the history of mankind' and managing to traduce his character in the same breath. Caesar, of course, chose his own wars; Cornwallis did not, but went where Parliament and the War Office sent him.

12.2 Analogous situations

12.2.1 Caesar and the Rubicon, Cornwallis and the North Atlantic

Caesar's Civil War is one of the recurring themes of the American debates, and leads us on nicely to the use of analogies between contemporary Britain and the classical world. There are five particularly interesting examples of these, beginning with perhaps the most familiar and

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\(^{84}\) Cobbett, *Parliamentary History* xxi col.892
universally-understood of all classical events. If every parliamentarian ought to know about the classical world in general, which was certainly the case in the general conception of the eighteenth-century gentleman, it was practically impossible not to have a reasonable notion of the career of Julius Caesar, whose Commentaries were and remain widely used as a teaching text for basic Latin grammar. In 1777, Dunning remarked that 'there is not a schoolboy of three years' standing who is unaware' of the basic events of the fall of the Roman Republic. If the use of ancient history as a tool in parliamentary rhetoric can be attributed in part to its familiarity in the education of gentlemen and members, both in school and university, we would expect to find a lot of Caesar and his career, and would not be disappointed.

From the middle of 1774 until well into the war, there is a particular focus on perhaps the second most famous quotation produced by Caesar's career – *alea iacta est* (the die is cast); said to have been Caesar's remark on crossing the Rubicon stream which in 49 BC marked the dividing line between Caesar's province of Cisalpine Gaul and Italy proper, which it was treason to cross with an army. When this event and phrase are first referred to, Edmund Burke, speaking against the 3rd reading of the Massachusetts Government Bill, rebukes unnamed speakers in the Lords, who 'said [we have] passed the Rubicon', reminding those who see war in America as inevitable that, 'he that passed the Rubicon drew his sword against his country and expired at last upon the hand of his own friend.' The same quotation reappeared, after several years' absence, in the debate on the King's Speech of 1777, in another long and wide-ranging speech by the indefatigable Hon. Temple Luttrell, never one to pass up a rhetorical own goal when it was offered him by the government presumably alluding to the Rubicon once more.

[W]e are brought back to that favourite passage of the Rubicon and the *alea iacta*; of a truth there is some justice in the comparison between our ministers in crossing the Atlantic and Caesar crossing the river Rubicon from Gaul; for though these ministers, considered as statesmen or commanders, are as like to Caesar as I to Hercules, yet did he like them take up battle against the constitution of his country; and having rashly taken the first decisive step he saw no possibility of retreating without the loss of his credit, his office, perhaps the forfeit of his life, for his offences had been scarcely less than the crimes of Catiline. What Caesar remarked of the march of Caesar to the capital may well be applied also to our ministers 'he came well provided with

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85 Almon, Parliamentary Register v 167
87 Simmons & Thomas, Debates Respecting North America, iv 349
everything (says the celebrated orator) except a good cause.' But before I dismiss this transaction of the Rubicon which is so favourite a trait of history with leaders and over-rulers of administration, I would admonish and confine them to deduce from thence one wholesome lesson which is this: When Caesar crossed the Rubicon he yet proposed to the senate to withdraw his army on certain humble conditions; and the matter being agitated in the Senate Marcellus the consul and the Patrician faction in general held it unbecoming the dignity of the commonwealth 'to treat with rebels having arms in their hands' and so preserved their etiquette and … paid for it with the total loss of their power, and annihilation of the liberties of their country.88

Luttrell begins by reiterating Burke's point of over three years earlier, that a comparison between Caesar and the administration is an unhappy one when they stand accused by the Americans of violating the constitutional compact and the traditional liberties of their people. So far this is as we would expect complete with an allusion to Catiline, doubtless recalling Wilkes' attack almost two years to the day before. The ironic reversal, casting the Americans as the rebellious Caesar and the government as the last patricians, ignorant of the depth of the trouble they have sleep-walked into, is new. Even for some time after the outbreak of open warfare, that would have been a curious argument from the opposition benches, where many prominent spokesmen were still arguing that peace with America was the natural state of affairs if the government would only stop issuing new provocations. Furthermore it associates the 'blameless' Americans with the military usurper, a contradiction one might expect a later speaker to follow up, though none is recorded as doing so. Luttrell here offers the government the new and unpalatable prospect that they have already lost the war; America will hold the whip hand in any peace negotiations. Like Marcellus and his fragile patrician coalition, Lord North and the government are doomed not to recognise this until it is too late; whatever the consequences they will, ultimately, have nobody but themselves to blame.

This passage also has a strong rhetorical focus on learning - 'deduce', 'confine them', 'one wholesome lesson' and so forth. Luttrell is literally schooling his opponents, correcting the gaps in their education which, rhetorically, demonstrate their unfitness for office – many of the administration not having benefited from Westminster's high standard of classical teaching. Had they been taught their ancient history earlier, it suggests, the whole unedifying mess might have been avoided. Again, we have a reference to a particularly familiar period; Caesar was always a popular choice in education as an introduction to extended passages of Latin

88 Cobbett, Parliamentary History xix col.439
prose and the collapse of the Roman Republic was considered the most significant part of ancient history, certainly the most written about, so it is unsurprising to see Caesar so much referenced.

12.2.2 Separation and concentration of powers

The separation of governmental powers might very well be taken as one of the key political ideas coming out of the American Revolution and established in its fullest form by the US Constitution just three years after the end of the fighting. Despite Montesquieu's encomia of the division of powers in the 'mixed constitution' of King, Lords and Commons, this was considered too narrow a base to be called a 'separation' by the framers of the American Constitution. Parliament did not seem to consider itself a set of separate bodies or classes, or rather considered those differences constitutionally of secondary relevance compared to the unitary, sovereign entity that was the King-in-Parliament. When Montesquieu and his contemporaries talk of 'mixture' or 'separation' of the sovereignty, which are not opposites but closely cognate concepts, they mean as much representation of different social classes as the division of power between institutions – this sense, which would have been recognisable to Aristotle and intimately familiar to Polybius, was that in which Parliament thought of itself. In the context of a 2000-year tradition of idealising the 'mixed constitution' the classical framing of such issues is unsurprising.

In 1766 Lord Lyttelton proposed a firm reply to American grievances on the grounds of the unitary nature of Parliamentary sovereignty; that 'in all states ... the government must rest somewhere, and that must be fixed, or else there is an end of all government, 'imperium in imperio' … [but this does] not exclude the existence of inferior legislatures with restrained powers subject to the superior legislature. That the colonies are of this kind the many statutes made to bind them since their first settlement plainly evince.' The phrase 'imperium in imperio' translates 'state within a state'; the condition of having two mutually contradictory authorities within one polity, which could therefore not be said to be truly united. The alternative Lyttelton foresaw, if the unity of Parliamentary sovereignty was challenged, was

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89 Parliament's and particularly the Commons' conception of itself is considered, very much in these terms, by Christopher Reid, *Imprison’d Wranglers: The Rhetorical Culture of the House of Commons* (Oxford 2012) pp.4-6
90 The applicability of the phrases 'mixed constitution' and 'separation of powers' to Britain in this period is discussed in M.Goldie and R.Wokler (eds), *The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought* (Cambridge, 2006) pp.331-7.
91 Cobbett, *Parliamentary History* xvi col.166-7
that, 'we shall have many legislators, we shall have Lycurguses and Solons in every coffee-house, tavern and gin-shop in London.' In other words, if American colonial assemblies can argue with Parliament and the genie of constitutional alteration is out of the bottle, why should any agitator accept the status quo?

The same concern over divided sovereignty had been raised by Lord Mansfield in 1765, this time in much more explicitly classical terms: in a state of divided authority and loyalties,

> Are not concessions always dangerous? In the struggles between the Senate and People at Rome, what did the Senate get by treating, but a master to both? What did Charles I gain by giving way to exorbitant demands and not persisting when in the right (as he sometimes was) but the loss of his crown and life?[^92]

Mansfield is clearly taking up an ultramontane position here; Charles I's political position was not characterised by giving in to 'exorbitant demands' and most constitutional thought of the day would surely have blamed his 'loss of crown and life' more on persisting when in the wrong than vice versa.

The classical analogy is, at least in the compressed version we have it, somewhat confused. If Mansfield refers to the secessions of the plebs and the struggles to open high offices to plebeian candidates, what the Senate gained was two centuries of relative harmony and a much broader-based and more durable aristocracy – the vast majority of Caesar's contemporaries in the Senate were not patricians, although still aristocrats. If Mansfield refers to the last years of the Roman Republic, the struggle was hardly 'between Senate and People', though elements of the lower classes were mobilised on one side or another of a conflict where all factions were dominated by senators from the upper aristocracy. This view might, generously, be taken as a logical extension of the position adopted in Adam Ferguson's very widely-read history of the Roman Republic; that the Senate’s absolute authority over both its individual members and the Roman people more generally had been essential to the preservation of the increasingly decadent republic.[^93] However, it is more likely that Mansfield had got his patricians and his optimates slightly mixed up, a slip which the Opposition might well have noticed and made something of, as we see happening at other times in this and the previous chapter.

[^92]: Letter from Maryland Colonial Agent Governor Sharpe, Maryland Archives MS 14, 244-8, quoted in Simmons & Thomas, *Debates Respecting North America*, ii Appendix 2.
[^93]: See extended discussion of Ferguson in Chapter 3 above pp.50-3
The issue of divided sovereignty was given new life a decade later from the Opposition benches by the redoubtable Governor Johnstone, whose name recurs frequently in this chapter. Johnstone, although he had never been to university, had a deep knowledge of Roman history, and the following passage is a bold overturning of the appeal to unitary sovereignty which had been a, perhaps the, major plank of the government's case against the American colonies. If neither modern nor original, given that it would have been familiar to Machiavelli and may well owe a debt to his Discourses, it is still an effective questioning of assumptions fundamental enough that the opposition seldom challenged them:

I say it demonstrates a perfect ignorance of the history of civil society to say ... that two independent legislatures cannot exist in the same community, but therefore we are to destroy the entire fabric of these governments which have subsisted so many years. Mankind are constantly quoting some trite maxim and appealing to their limited theory in politics, whilst they reject established facts. I say a free government necessarily involves many clashing jurisdictions if pushed to the extremes. I maintain this species of government must ever depend more on the spirit of freedom which first established it, than on all the parchment you can cover with words. I aver that in the most active, triumphant republic which ever appeared on the stage of the world, two distinct legislative authorities actually did exist. The comitia tributa and the comitia centuriata. The whole government of Athens would appear as containing so many ridiculous paradoxes to those wise politicians. The actual state of Holland, where every town is a government in itself. The deliberations of the States General [thereof], where no money can be raised unless the whole unanimous.  

Again, a Roman historian might take issue with the details, assuming they are reported correctly; the comitiae were not exactly legislatures, nor were they really capable of contradicting one another. However, the general idea that the republics of antiquity existed in a state of dynamic tension between factions, institutions and social classes, where authority was never absolute, is an interesting one which, as here, can adduce evidence ancient and modern. As we have seen in the chapter on Scottish moral philosophy (Chapter 9 above) the question of where ultimate authority in a state could be found was very much live in academia; it is interesting to see it reproduced in quotidian politics here. This is a clear

94 Almon, Parliamentary Register, iii 24
95 See ch.9, especially pp.183-5 above
example of the concerns of university teaching being shared at the heart of political life. One might say it is a chicken-and-egg situation, unclear whether the political concern or the philosophical came first, but it is certain that the relevance of the moral and political philosophy curriculum is shown here. Both in Scotland and in Westminster, it is through the lens of the ancient world that the debate is most clearly expressed.

Alongside the specifically British debate about the extent of Parliamentary sovereignty, we have a wider, more abstract debate about whether multiple sources of legitimacy are possible, desirable or necessary. This debate draws on on the familiar inheritance of classical politics and history far more than 'modern' theories, because they would be more familiar, more accepted and thus more persuasive. The average MP might not know Adam Smith from Adam Ferguson, but muddled memories of lectures on Roman Antiquities, or schoolboy primers of Roman history, in these cases clearly supplied an alternative means of articulating concerns about legitimacy, authority and centralisation.

The Roman institution of dictatorship was also used to discuss issues of state power and the division or concentration of responsibility, both in peace and wartime. The dictatorship, prior to its adaptation by Julius Caesar which gives it its modern sense, was a temporary office, whereby a single leader was invested with all the powers of the Roman state, plus others which did not normally exist such as the power of putting citizens to death without trial, for a strictly limited period of not more than six months, generally at a time of extreme military emergency.96

In Parliament this was usually, but not always, a critical comparison, for the obvious reason that if people have heard of one Roman dictator it is Julius Caesar and his self-promotion to 'dictator perpetuus' – the uncrowned (for the time being) King of Rome. Indeed, the abuse of the dictatorship was earlier used as an example of unacceptably unconstitutional behaviour by the Earl of Effingham, who said in 1775 'we have no more right to exercise the power of taxation in [America] than a Roman dictator had to begin his office with a declaration that his power should be perpetual.'97 The establishment of a military despotism in the guise of emergency powers is hardly an idea any parliament would like to encourage, and it borders on astonishing that a government supporter did just that. Wilkes spoke at the third reading of the 1777 Bill to suspend Habeas Corpus, properly entitled the 'Bill to Empower his Majesty to

96 Oxford Classical Dictionary “Dictator”
97 Almon, Parliamentary Register, ii 154
secure and detain persons charged with or suspected of high treason committed in America or Piracy on the high Seas', beginning,

Much has been said, Sir, both in this House and in committee, about a dictator and his extensive powers. Many periods of Roman history have been retailed to us minutely enough. Comparisons between that virtuous republic and this corrupt monarchy are usually more brilliant than solid, more beautiful than just. A right hon. Gentleman [Mr Conway] [has just said that] King William the Third, was a dictator here after the suspension in his reign. Should the present Bill … pass into a law, I shall regard the noble lord in the blue riband as the modern dictator of this great empire, possessed of most ample and despotic powers. The first act of business in an ancient dictator, I remember, was to make his coadjutor in office his magister equitum. I am sure for such an office he will turn to the noble lord so near him,* who to his immortal honour … charged the enemies of our country at the head of the British horse.98 In one particular respecting the ancient dictators, I beg to set right a very high law-officer [Attorney-General Thurlow] among us. All Roman magistrates were not as he says suspended by that creation. The tribunes of the people, but they alone, preserved their authority.99

*Lord George Germaine.

It is clear from this passage that at least two speakers, Conway and Thurlow, had compared the government's proposal to the ancient dictatorship while speaking in favour of the Bill. Although the committee stage was reported briefly in the newspapers, and included in the Parliamentary Register, no record of either of their speeches survives. Four years later, Dundas, the Lord Advocate and dominant politician of Scotland, did manage to appear on record saying that the situation called for dictatorship, in a long speech opposing attempts to extend the parliamentary session to allow further enquiry into the situation.

[He said] deliberative assemblies had nothing to do with military operations. The Romans, so far from consulting their senate, or keeping them sitting in times of difficulty and danger, armed the executive part of the state with the most extensive and ample power: nay more, they went further, they suspended all the civil function of

98 Wilkes' reference to the magister equitum, which was the title of the Dictator's right-hand man and translates 'Master of Horse' refers to Lord George Germaine's military career, cut short by court-martial after the Battle of Minden (where he commanded the cavalry) in 1759, when due to a personal feud among the high command he refused to attack when ordered. In an unprecedented court-martial verdict he was found “unfit to serve His Majesty in any military capacity whatever”.

99 Almon, Parliamentary Register, vi 247-8
the constitution and vested the whole civil and military power in one man, under the name Dictator. All kinds of political controul, consuls &c., gave way and their powers were exercised by a Dictator. Instead of keeping the Senate sitting after the battle of Cannae, they appointed a Dictator and by that means saved their country.100

The first and last sentences make clear Dundas' sympathy for the institution of dictatorship; in a gently mocking reply Burke said that 'as to the dictatorship so warmly recommended by the hon. gentleman, though he had a high opinion of him as a politician, he had never contemplated him in his new role as historian. He had no doubt of his being equally great in both.'101 Burke, well-read in ancient history and particularly the speeches Cicero made in the Senate regarding sitting dictator Julius Caesar, would be well aware Dundas made the same technical error as Thurlow, and also failed to realise that the appointment of a dictator did not prevent the Senate meeting, although it had rather less to do, with military affairs and all appointments to office in the dictator's hands. Along with Wilkes' confident assertion that he will regard North as 'the modern dictator', this clearly implies a consensus against the institution and title, perhaps because most of the less-educated members thought of Julius Caesar as dictator perpetuus, rather than the more heroic stories of dictators of earlier centuries. At an earlier stage of the 1777 Bill, Dunning made, in opposition, the only other surviving reference to the dictatorship in that debate.

The power intended to be vested in the crown ... is most evidently a dictatorial power similar to that exercised by the Roman dictators ... We all know the motives for creating such a power. It will hardly be contended that any such motives exist at present. We all know the frequent abuses of it and the horrid purpose toward the latter period of the commonwealth to which it was applied.102

The phrase regarding motives is unclear; Dunning may be referring to the absence of the sort of military crisis which typically provoked the appointment of a Roman dictator, or pointedly not accusing the ministry of the absolutist ambitions which motivated Sulla and Caesar, whilst still planting the insinuation in his auditors' minds. The fact that he later goes on to mention the 'frequent abuses' suggests the former interpretation is more likely; the situation, whilst severe, is hardly comparable to barbarians at the gates of Rome. In any case, Dunning, like Wilkes, clearly does not think emergency powers are required; the speeches from the proponents of the bill, in the main, do not fight on this ground but prefer to de-emphasise the

100 Almon, Parliamentary Register, xii 414-5
101 Ibid xii 418
102 Ibid. v 167
extent of the bill's applicability and potential for abuse.

As with the broader issue of the separation or concentration of powers, the specific case of the ultimate concentration of authority represented by the dictatorship provided a counterpart to more abstract concerns about abuse of power. Unlike examples from British history, a Roman dictatorship was set in (what was perceived as) a comparable polity, more relevant than appeals to medieval English practice, and less freighted with political or ideological controversy than more recent British history, but at the same time it represented a hyperbolic magnification of the issues at stake, conjuring up both superhuman heroes of republican virtue and earth-shaking disasters from the Civil Wars. The larger-than-life scale of 'that fame or infamy which it obtained from its contemporaries, or those who came immediately after' for Caesar or Scaevola (to quote a popular schoolboys' abridgement of Oliver Goldsmith's Roman History) may not have been conducive to precise scholarship or understanding of ancient societies, but it did render them useful standards to rally round in debate, lending an air of epochal grandeur to a rather prosaic issue.103

12.2.3 Carthage, the Punic Wars and the Punic Curse

Another interesting case is the employment, by all sides of the debate around the time of the Boston Tea Party, of references to the Punic Wars and particularly the last (140s BC), a conversation which went on for about a year and does not seem to have come up again as the evolving situation rendered it obsolete. One might expect to hear much of the Second Punic War, which in Hannibal and Scipio produced two of the most memorable heroes of antiquity, and in ten books of Livy was used to teach Latin to centuries of schoolboys. However, it is the Third War, a considerably less straightforward conflict which has troubled two millennia of moralists over its necessity and the harshness of Roman conduct, which comes to the forefront of debate. Montesquieu, Hooke and many others including John Hill in his lectures at Edinburgh made much of the ambition and brutality which made the Roman Republic such an effective engine of conquest, so it is unsurprising that that concern should appear in parliamentary debate.

The topic was introduced by the North supporter Charles Van, MP for Brecon and staunch, almost parodic anti-American. Van is one of the minority of MPs discussed in this chapter.

103 O.Goldsmith, Dr Goldsmith's Roman History; Abridged by himself for the use of schools (London 1772) (ix) discussed p.34
who does not appear to have attended a university, and indeed nothing is known of his education or early life save that his father was rather a recluse. Perhaps his lack of formal education explains why his classical allusions were found more amusing than instructive by the House. The general tenor of the debate was that the Boston Port Bill was agreed to be harsh, but in the opinion of the administration it was justified and effective; in that of the opposition, it was not. Van's contribution might have been calculated to unite the House, but instead sent a phrase echoing down the debates of that year; Delenda est Carthago.

This Bill does not seem a proper way to bring this people into due deference. When you see before this last clause … 'After that the port to be restored.' No! No! No! … if they should block up the harbour I say Delenda est Carthago … make it a mark that shall never be restored. They bring an odium upon themselves whichever part they take. Impress the Americans 'that was the town.' Now destroy them if ever you fear a ball against it. Demolish it, that is my opinion. Delenda est Carthago.

Van had clearly overstepped the mark; in the course of the passage of this Bill not only did he propose the destruction of Boston, but the setting of forest fires in Massachusetts to prevent rebels fleeing justice. In reply to his speech above, Col. Isaac Barre gently mocked the extremity of his proposal, pointing out that destroying the East India Company's tea, whilst undeniably illegal, hardly constituted an act of war. Van spoke again on the subject of the Punic Wars, and seems to have been considered entertaining if not helpful. 'Mr Van in a long speech caused much mirth in the beginning and entertained the House with a long comparison between Britain and America and Rome and Carthage' which ended in calling the Americans 'rank ideots [sic] within doors' and predicted they would end like Hannibal 'who vowed the destruction of Rome and fell in the impious attempt.' Amusement might have begun with the well-known fact that Hannibal did not die in battle with the Romans, but committed suicide.

The phrase Delenda est Carthago, however, did have an impact. Barre paired it with remarks in the Lords about the Bostonians having crossed the Rubicon, saying 'the Language of both Houses is far from that of this country. Too hostile.' At no point does any speaker seem to

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105 Cavendish Diary, MS 254 ff.250-2
107 Almon, Parliamentary Register, vii 343
108 Cavendish Diary, MS 257, quoted in Simmons & Thomas, Debates Respecting North America, iv 349
have referenced the Punic Curse, the idea that Rome lost its moral authority thanks to the severity of the unnecessary Third Punic War, but the sense that even stern Rome, let alone liberal England, went too far in its treatment of Carthage is palpable. Barre would have been likely to recognise the implications of reference to that conflict; like Burke he had attended Trinity College Dublin as well as serving in the Army, and was considered one of the finest and most learned orators in the House, though his Latin was bad. Temple Luttrell returned to the phrase in a debate on the state of the Navy in 1775.

Sir, the far more considerable part of the people of England do now wish us to use temper, moderation and forbearance toward America ... Sir, when the two most renowned republics of ancient times had long contended for universal empire, and victory over many a hard-fought field had held almost an equal balance, then it was the rigid censor [M.Cato] denounced that memorable judgement *Delenda est Carthago*. Sir, the Carthaginians were the natural rivals of the trade and glory of Rome, they had in cool blood inhumanly put to death one of the most perfect heroes and patriots her annals could boast: in their national character they were perfidious to a proverb; and they early led their children to the altar to lisp assent to solemn adjuration of eternal warfare and vengeance against Rome. In short, Sir, the further existence of these Africans was become quite incompatible with the peace and security of the Roman commonwealth.

The words *Delenda est Carthago* were, in the reign of our Charles II, borrowed by a member of the other House of Parliament, the famous Earl Shaftesbury, in height of passionate resentment against the Hollanders: but Sir, though the Hollanders had to the most substantial injuries added the provoking insult of sailing up to the emporium of your commerce, with brooms at their mast heads, though they had by many an inveterate combat on the ocean brought your marine power, and consequently our very being as a people, to as desperate a crisis as ever befell Rome during the rage of the Punic Wars, yet, Sir, it is a well-known anecdote of that day, there was scarce a peer in the assembly but stood aghast and shuddered at the unchristian severity of the sentence. *Delenda est Carthago* has been applied for the third time: it has, Sir, been recently and publicly applied, by an avowed zealous partisan of the present administration of your government, to our fellow subjects of America, and the news will, I fear, ere long reach our colonies.

109 Reid, *Imprison'd Wranglers*, pp.238-9, where an extended use of Tacitus' *Agricola* to structure a debate about West Indian policy is discussed – further evidence of a connection between classicism and questions of empire.

110 Almon, *Parliamentary Register* i 180-2
This broadens the issue considerably and introduces a few new themes. The Romans are presented as rigid in their vengeance, in contrast to the people of England who urge 'temper, moderation and forbearance'. The difference is ascribed in part to Christianity, as Shaftesbury's remark was looked on as 'unchristian', and partly to the fact that Luttrell, an avowed pro-American, sees the Colonies as in the right, certainly when compared to Carthage in the 150s BC or the Netherlands in the 1670s. Luttrell is also concerned that news of such uncompromising attitudes would harden hearts in Massachusetts and the rest of the colonies against Westminster, particularly coming from a member who had hitherto been noted for his quiet support of the government of the day.

The analogy was probably suggested to Van by the similarity between the Roman demands which began the Third Punic War and the provisions of the Boston Port Bill. As a necessary concession to avoid invasion by overwhelmingly superior Roman forces, Scipio Aemilianus demanded of the Carthaginians that they close the port of Carthage and remove the whole population seventeen miles inland. The Boston Port Act similarly closed the port and moved the seat of government to Salem, which although on the coast was unsuitable for use as a port due to shoal waters. The Carthaginians initially accepted Roman demands, but as soon as the Roman commissioners had gone home armed themselves and rebuilt their fleet for a gallant, hopeless defence. There was in any case no practical way to move a city of tens of thousands of people. The parallel with the situation of 1774 is obvious, and was hammered home by Burke in a fragmentary speech in which he called for 'any example, not that I think all rigour justified by that example' of such inhumane behaviour, which he went on to relate at some length. Burke was particularly incensed by the statement by an unnamed Lord, perhaps North, that the Bill represented 'no measure of rigour', asking his audience, if they could not recall the classical case, to imagine the Thames stopped up by government order and the misery that would ensue for those who made their living from the Port of London. The 'not recall' is a polite fiction – that all the members present would be as aware as Burke of the precedent. Those who were not would be reminded of the fact that Burke had more of the learning appropriate to a statesman and leader than they did.

12.2.4 Athens, Sparta and the Peloponnesian War

111 Cavendish Diary, MS 255 ff.34-87, quoted in Simmons & Thomas Debates Respecting North America iv 124-6; the original is in fragmentary shorthand.
By way of a leaven to the predominance of Roman history in this discussion, it is worth mentioning two or three instances of reference to Greek history and in particular to the Peloponnesian War. Thucydides' work, often held to be the first serious, well-researched work of history, was considerably more obscure than the common fare of the Roman Republic. In the 1770s, reading of Greek prose in schools and universities was in its infancy. Christ Church had only just begun to expect undergraduates to read Thucydides, Herodotus or the Greek dramatists, few Greek prose authors had made their way onto the Arts curriculum at Trinity College Dublin, and even the better public and grammar schools were not taking their students much past elementary Greek verse in class. Reference to Greek history, therefore, was not an appeal to a shared class of knowledge among parliamentarians as it might have been half a century later, but a rhetorical claim to superior knowledge and understanding. Whilst Greek was clearly supposed to be something a gentleman could read and understand, this was not always the case in practice, as may be seen from the wildly varying standard of classical learning at Oxford and Cambridge discussed in Chapter 4. If a grounding in the life and politics of ancient societies, or at any rate the linguistic capacity to gain one, was part of the qualification for gentle status, much less the status of 'statesman', then the man who lacked such grounding was arguably not quite a gentleman.

This claim was put into black and white by the Whig Duke of Manchester, who repeatedly referred in debate to how he had 'looked into books … to see if history could furnish me with precedent[s]' for the despicable conduct of the government in one matter or another. Despite not being formally educated - he was taught at home and seems not to have attended school or university - he here claims to be making up for the defects of his education by quite literally doing his homework. Being schooled at home does not, however, mean his classical attainments were necessarily inferior. He was neither the first nor the last to compare the conduct of the British government to that of the Athenians; the Earl of Abingdon, after questioning the relevance of references to Roman history, gave the Earl of Westmorland a rather patronising lecture on a better source of analogies.

As his Lordship seemed desirous to hunt for examples drawn from ancient history, that it was a pity a translation of Thucydides had not fallen into his hands; there his Lordship might find some circumstances and events much more applicable to Britain than those his lordship had mentioned, who would not then be at a loss for the more appropriate similes to every one step the British government has

112 'Montagu, George' in History of Parliament 1754-90 ii
taken since 1774, nor of the events which such conduct must inevitably draw after it.\textsuperscript{113}

Mention of 'translation' is again an attempt to claim a superior education – the 'ignorant' Westmorland cannot be expected to have read Thucydides in Greek, but might at least have read a translation. This rather reverses their actual educational backgrounds. Abingdon had been a Nobleman Commoner at Magdalen College, Oxford, from c.1759-61, when its educational level was extremely low.\textsuperscript{114} Westmorland, however, had attended Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and been tutored by Bennet, whose college lectures are discussed at length in Chapter 5.\textsuperscript{115}

The Peloponnesian Wars seemed particularly relevant to the American situation for two reasons. The first is the analogy drawn between Britain/France and Athens/Sparta; the former a liberal, maritime, imperial and commercial power; the latter poorer, more militarily disciplined, more concentrated and far stronger on land; intermittently at war over a period of a century or more. This analogy is only one of a network of such classical comparisons between Britain and France over the eighteenth century. Others which appear frequently include Britain/Rome and France/Greece, or Rome and Carthage either way around – on the one hand Britain had Roman liberty, civic virtue (compared to France) and imperial expansionism; on the other, Carthaginian commerce, wealth, decadence and primarily maritime power.

The other important parallel drawn with the Peloponnesian War and the American Revolution is the Sicilian Expedition as a precursor of British military intervention in the colonies. Before such intervention had approached its full extent, Lord Camden summed up the parallels in a debate on the employment of hired German troops in the colonies:

\begin{quote}
The consequences [of further military action in America] he feared, would turn out to be exactly similar to what happened to the Athenians in their contest with their colonies in ... Sicily. They were a great maritime nation, they planted colonies, they increased their riches, power and maritime strength by this plantation, they grew at length mighty and overbearing, tyrannical to their dependencies, and jealous of library in any part of the Athenian dominions beyond the confines of Attica. They had triumphed over their neighbours the republic of
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{113} Cobbett, \textit{Parliamentary History}, xxii col.653
\textsuperscript{114} S.Lee, 'Bertie, Willoughby' in \textit{Dictionary of National Biography} (63vols, Oxford 1881-1900) iv
\textsuperscript{115} R.Bayne, 'Fane, John, 1759-1841' in \textit{Dictionary of National Biography} xviii
Sparta, who were in some relation to then what France is to us, their superior on land and ever their rival in power and greatness. What was the consequence? Intoxicated with their increase in power and opulence they began to oppress their colonies; the colonies took arms, four generals of great note were sent out from Athens to subdue them; the Athenians were defeated; more troops were sent ... at length they were totally expelled that island ... Thus deprived of every foot of land they possessed in Sicily, and divided among themselves, they shortly after fell prey to their ambitious and inveterate enemies, the republic of Sparta.116

This was repeated almost point for point two years later by the Duke of Manchester, with French intervention clearly imminent, showing how prescient Camden's prediction was seen to be.117 In fact, the analogy is not historically accurate. Whilst Athens did have client states in Sicily, the Sicilian Expedition of 415 to 413 BC was not against a rebellious colony, but aimed principally at Syracuse, which was founded from Corinth and for most of the fifth century allied with Sparta. Thucydides is quite clear on this, though discussion of the small cities of Sicily and their shifting allegiances complicates his narrative, but three separate speakers claim the Sicilian Expedition was a colonial war. Whilst it was certainly a diversion far overseas from a more urgent conflict near at hand, Athens had no colonies in Sicily at the time of the Expedition. Either the speakers' opinion of their opponents' knowledge was very poor, or this was a common misconception at the time. This might serve as further evidence that Greek history was considered a particular feather in the cap of an orator who could casually toss off references to Thucydides – here Camden and Manchester were reaching beyond their firm knowledge for a comparison which, had they actually read Thucydides, they should have known was of limited relevance.

12.3 Colonies Ancient and Modern

One particular issue which deserves separate treatment is the drawing of parallels between ancient and modern models of colonisation. Classical models were the only ones available for the idea of a settler colony; those of Spain and Portugal were perceived as conquered dependencies, ruling over a native population, whereas Greece and Rome like several other ancient civilisations were believed to have founded city-states from scratch on virgin ground. These references were not always accurate, the case of Athens, Syracuse and the Sicilian

116 Cobbett, Parliamentary History xviii cols. 800-2
117 Almon, Parliamentary Register ix 89
Expedition discussed above being particularly blatant, but they were nonetheless common.

Roman and Greek models of 'colonisation' were correctly picked up on as being very different; the difference was summed up by Yorke as early as 1764; whereas Greek and Norse colonies had little contact with the metropole save for a general feeling of kinship, the colonies of Rome remained under metropolitan rule, and inherited the full corpus of Roman law on their foundation. Attorney General Yorke argued that the original charter of Virginia, the oldest colony, 'seems to imitate a decree of the Roman senate' in this respect. He received a dismissive reply from Edmund Burke, who was alarmed at the number of speakers trying to apply classical and very old English precedents as if nothing had changed since the reigns of Henry VIII or even Richard II; 'We cannot resort to the example of Greek and Roman colonies. Nor must we seek for it in the older part of our constitution about the governing of an Empire the existence of which they could not even conceive.'<sup>118</sup> Despite the similarities between Britain and Rome in other ways, their colonies were of totally different types; unfortunately, Ryder's diary did not record any expansion on this point by Burke.

However, plenty of speakers continued to resort to the example of Roman colonies, despite Burke's strictures. Lord Mansfield, in a debate referred to earlier, argued (in a somewhat garbled account) that 'The King could not render [his colonies] independent of the British legislature, as the Romans too had planted their colonies but the latter had never denied their subordination as the laws and constitutions of this country were prior to all charters and could not be superseded by them.' Mansfield's argument for Parliamentary supremacy over a colonial (royal) charter is apparently based in part on the fact that Roman colonies remained subordinate to the metropole, followed Roman law and paid tribute to the centre. Quite how this fits with the Crown's inability to alienate territory from Parliament is unclear, but the connection was clearly considered important, as Mansfield was the Lord Chief Justice, the recognised expert on the common law of England, which it was his life's work to reform and bring up to date without imperiling English liberties and the constitutional settlement.<sup>119</sup>

Several speakers raised Rome strictly as a negative example, a model of colonisation which, whilst comparable to Britain's, was undesirable. Frederick Montagu, replying to an unnamed speaker on the tea duty, said that, 'my honourable friend did not strike me with the justice of

<sup>118</sup> Ryder Diary, quoted in P.Langford (ed), The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke: Volume II: Party, Parliament and the American Crisis, 1766-1774 (Oxford 1981) p.50

<sup>119</sup> Letter from Maryland Colonial Agent Governor Sharpe, Maryland Archives MS 14, 244-8, quoted in Simmons & Thomas, Debates Respecting North America, ii Appendix 2.
comparing the Roman way of treating their colonies … they were generally very severe,’ thus limiting their ability to maintain control without excessive force.\textsuperscript{120} George Dempster raised the same point a year later:

\begin{quote}
Look, Sir, into the history of the provinces of other states, of the Roman provinces in ancient times, of the French, Spanish, Dutch and Turkish provinces of more modern dates. You will find every page of it stained with oppressive acts of violence, cruelty, injustice and peculation; but in the British provinces the little assemblies have constantly restrained the despotism and corrected the follies of their governors.\textsuperscript{121}
\end{quote}

Here, the British empire is identified as consisting not of 'colonies' but of 'provinces'. The distinction is not arbitrary. In Roman parlance, a 'colony' was a city-state established by Roman citizens; a 'province' could in the Republican era mean many things, but by the late Republic and after was defined, more or less, as the area of land under the jurisdiction of a proconsul, the largest territorial division of the Roman empire.\textsuperscript{122} The American colonies were not organised in city-states, though several of them had started off as such, and thus the Roman \textit{provincia} is probably a better analogy even for the individual colonies, much less for 'America' as a whole. However, \textit{provinciae} all included conquered peoples as well as colonies operating under a mish-mash of local and Roman law, whereas the British colonies were seen, except for Quebec, as consisting of settlers only. Neither analogy would be entirely appropriate; Dempster considers the difference lies in the colonial assemblies having the power to check the governors, which their Roman equivalents would not have had, though they could in the Imperial period appeal to Caesar, and in the late Republic might sue their governor for extortion or oppression.\textsuperscript{123}

The provincial model of the Roman empire did provide a certain amount of ammunition for disputes about the balance of civil and military authority in the relatively peaceful period after the Seven Years' War. Governors Pownall and Johnstone, formerly of Massachusetts and West Florida respectively, were also MPs and used that platform to complain about the independence of regular troops stationed in America from the civilian control of the colonial

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{120} Cavendish, \textit{Diary}, MS 255 ff.165-231 (shorthand), quoted in Simmons & Thomas, \textit{Debates Respecting North America} iv 144
\textsuperscript{121} Almon, \textit{Parliamentary Register}, iii 61
\textsuperscript{123} For the Republican period, ibid. pp.577-9; for the Imperial, F.Millar, \textit{The Emperor in the Roman World} (London 1977) pp.443-7
\end{footnotes}
governors. Under the Roman Republic, a proconsul had commanded the troops in his province. One of the key changes made by the emperor Augustus was (to cut a long story short) to make himself commander-in-chief of the Army, with the right to appoint the commanders of military units and the governors of all provinces with regular troops stationed therein. The more peaceful interior provinces continued to have their governors increasingly nominally appointed by the Senate and held only limited numbers of garrison troops, except for the anomalous case of Africa, roughly approximating to modern Libya, Tunisia and eastern Algeria. In Africa, the proconsul was appointed by the Senate, but there was also a full legion stationed there, which was not directly under the proconsul's command. This led to a certain degree of friction, analogised by Governor Johnstone as follows:

We shall find that the disputes which arose between the Roman Proconsul in Africa and the military lieutenants, sprung from the heterogenous mode of giving the provinces a government which was eternally at war with itself, and which to be faithfully executed could not but plunge the inhabitants in either revolt or destruction. If the Proconsul, for instance, behaved as a good magistrate he had frequent occasions …as unavoidable as they were frequent, and they were frequent, of checking the military lieutenant; and if the lieutenant behaved as a brave soldier, there was no prospect of his living upon any reasonable terms with the proconsul. In short, each claiming the superior power, the whole frame of their administration became unhinged, and the result, like our present disputes with the colonies, proved disgrace to the governor, and distraction to the people.124

Johnstone, himself a colonial governor, thus appropriates what might appear a minor or obscure episode to support his argument for increased local control over the garrisons. He is aided by the association of this division of command with arbitrary government, an allusion which his audience could be hoped if not expected to have understood without prompting. One of the examples of the emperors' increasing tyranny was generally assumed to be the removal of the Senate from any power over the provinces or the army; the implication was not flattering to the administration, which had in recent memory seen one damaging comparison between the King's ministers and the worst excesses of Roman emperors.

Overall, what seems like one of the most obvious areas of comparison between British and classical practice, the structure and functioning of a far-flung empire, is in fact not very often referred to, and seldom in complimentary terms. It is seen more often in reference to Indian

124 Cobbett, *Parliamentary History* xvi col.985
affairs (see next chapter) perhaps because of the obvious differences between the Roman Empire and Britain's empire in America. In the western hemisphere, the British empire was one of settlers in a sense that Rome's, although it contained many settlers, was not. In the East, the model of Rome's huge and diverse empire of conquered peoples, ruled by force, fear, syncretism and psychology, was perhaps more applicable and remained so into the twentieth century. Whilst the totally different Greek model of colonisation, where colonists left the metropole to make a fresh and independent start, might have been applicable in the seventeenth century, it was obsolete, and its implications for American independence too alarming to be much discussed by this time. There is relatively little evidence of the teaching of Roman antiquities in the English universities, but we do know that the nature of military colonies was a part of the 'Four Antiquities' taught at this time in Scotland, as part of the general category of military affairs.\textsuperscript{125} Alexander's conquests and successors are among the topics William Scott is known to have lectured on at Oxford around this time, so we can perhaps see that concern dimly reflected in the discussion of ancient colonies.\textsuperscript{126}

12.4 O Tempora, O Mores

One of the main reasons for the continuing relevance of the ancient world to political thought both abstract and practical was the idea of national character, of \textit{mores} rather than actors such as institutions, laws and wealth in determining the character of a society. This was familiar in the academic and theoretical discourse of the day, particularly associated with Montesquieu's \textit{L'Esprit des Lois} and the works it influenced. In terms of practical politics, disputed claims to national character rendered precedents relevant or otherwise, allowed confident predictions of the outcomes of different policies, and shifted the moral high ground under the feet of speakers. Whilst there was broad agreement about some aspects of the national characters of the ancient world, others were hotly contested, as was their applicability to contemporary peoples, places and issues.

Two matters of national character as it pertains to the ancient world are particularly interesting: the idea of the vengeful and warlike nature of the Romans, and the rise or decline of civic virtue. Both were at the heart of the 'Enlightened narrative' of the Roman Republic identified by Pocock, and more generally were common tropes in discussions of Roman exceptionalism back to ancient times.

\textsuperscript{125} John Hill's fairly typical Antiquities lectures are discussed above, pp.165-7
\textsuperscript{126} Evidence for Scott's lectures is discussed pp.82-3
12.4.1 Pride and Pugnaciousness?

In general, there was agreement among politicians and scholars alike that the Romans had been a martial, proud nation, particularly when compared to Britain. We have already seen one example of this difference being indirectly attributed to Christianity, in the discussion of 'Delenda est Carthago'. Whether this change was necessarily beneficial was open for dispute. Temple Luttrell, in replying to the King's Speech of 1776 (referenced earlier p.219), claimed that,

> The force and prosperity of every nation depends in exact measure on its populousness. The Romans (says a learned author), destroying others, were at length themselves destroyed; continually in action and embarked in the most hazardous attempts, they wore out like a weapon kept constantly in use. Whoever will duly reflect on the state and transactions of this nation during the last 20 years will find her much reduced in inhabitants.¹²⁷

In this case, a warlike nature was clearly considered a national disadvantage, much as an honest understanding of statistics is to a politician. The Earl of Westmorland, however, was of quite the opposite view, and adduced Roman resilience in the face of defeat in arguing for Britain to redouble its efforts even after the disastrous battle of Yorktown;

> His Lordship [i.e. Westmorland] began by quoting the Roman History to prove that much greater disasters had befallen the Romans in their wars than the loss of 6000 men, and that as their misfortunes increased their exertions were greater; especially that they never thought of treating for peace immediately after a defeat. He particularly instanced the loss of three armies in one war and said, when Pyrrhus had gained a victory and asked if his enemies would make peace, their answer was 'give us back our victory and we will treat for peace.' So ought this country to act.¹²⁸

The indefatigability of the Romans was a common reference for pro-government speakers once fighting had broken out, a necessary reaction perhaps to the misfortunes of the British army in America. John Acland, who had been a contemporary of Stanhope's at University College, Oxford, when discussing Lord North's 'Conciliatory Proposition' in 1775, argued that

¹²⁸ Cobbett, Parliamentary History, xxii col.652
the Proposition would be more appropriate after a military victory than after the embarrassments of the Boston Tea Party and the Battles of Lexington and Concord;

That, Sir, which is magnanimity after victory, is timidity and foul disgrace before it. There may be situations, Sir, in which states may be found where they cannot, without certain ruin, acquiesce even in just claims; there are situations too, in which states may grant more than is asked and give more than is desired, with honour, security and advantage. The first of these situations precede great commotions; the second succeed compleat victory. I remember, Sir, the Romans, in a war they had with the Italian states, granted them, when conquered, those privileges which with a firmness peculiar to their nation with a firmness that led them to universal empire, they haughtily refused them before their contest.  

In other words, Parliament had no business making concessions, even justified ones, without first displaying its superiority of military force pour encourager les autres. Two discussions of diplomatic relations with Spain, 20 years apart, also addressed the decline of Rome's notorious prickliness. In 1754, William Beckford criticised the government on the grounds that the proposed wording of a public rebuke to the Spanish was both sycophantic in language and offensive in content, the worst of both worlds.

Such a regard had [the Romans] for their dignity, that they often put themselves to death in order to prevent their being made to do or suffer anything unbecoming their dignity; and we find Julius Caesar at the beginning of the civil war, imploring the soldiers of his army 'ut eius existimationem dignitatemque ab inimicis defendant.'

It is unclear who in this analogy are the Romans; Beckford is equally critical of the language and content of the proposed note, from opposite perspectives, so either the British could be being warned to stick to their dignity in language and tone, or to respect that of the Spanish with regard to substance. Twenty-three years later, with war with Spain beckoning again, Governor Johnstone assured the House that 'he did not look for, in this assembly, that Roman spirit which directed vengeance against the King of Epirus when Hannibal was in the centre of Italy; that period is past.' so he would not (yet) call for war against Spain, in spite of undoubted provocation.

129 Almon, Parliamentary Register, i 245  
130 Cobbett Parliamentary History xv col.360. The Latin translates as “that they should defend his status and dignity against his enemies.”  
131 Almon, Parliamentary Register, vi 280
The idea that Republican Rome was the exemplar of the 'virtuous' state, where citizens acted largely in the public interest and accepted the restraint of just laws, was popularised whilst the Republic still existed, with the period of 'virtue' always having ended about 50-60 years before the author's birth, so that he could have talked to the last men who remembered the good old days; e.g. Cicero placed the last days of Republican virtue in the 130s BC. It is an image that endured well into the nineteenth and even twentieth centuries, for as long as schoolboys read Livy at an impressionable age. Critiques of Roman 'civic virtue' were not uncommon, but might be considered pedantic, or simply not encountered by those whose classical reading ended when they left education.

Some pro-American speakers preferred to compare Americans, rather than Britons, to the simple, hardy people of early Rome. Wilkes called the Continental Congress 'worthy of Rome when Rome was free,' contrasting it with 'an insolent minister and the venal majority of a British Parliament' by way of explanation for Britain's rather inglorious military record to date (April 1778). Temple Luttrell, who had visited America in peacetime and travelled extensively, spoke in similar terms of the people in general:

I found in most of them the Spartan temperance, in many the Athenian urbanity; and notwithstanding the base and groundless imputations on their spirit which the cankered tongue of prejudice and slander has with so licentious a virulence here poured forth against them they will, if set to the proof, evince the Roman magnanimity, ere Rome fell under sceptered usurpation.

The cankered tongue of prejudice and slander certainly had something to say to the martial, Romanesque qualities of the American people; the Earl of Sandwich retailed an anecdote in the House of Lords about the American militia's conduct at the siege of Louisburg (Pittsburgh):

Sir Peter [Warren] finding what egregious cowards they were, and knowing of what importance such numbers must be to intimidate the French by their appearance, told these American heroes that his orders had been misunderstood; that he always intended to keep them in the rear of the army ... that it was the custom of generals to preserve their best troops to the last; that this was ... Roman custom, and as the

132 Ibid. vii 195
133 Ibid. i 243
Americans resembled the Romans in every particular, especially in courage and love to their country, he should make no scruple of following the Roman custom, and made no doubt but the modern Romans would shew acts of bravery equal to any in ancient Rome.  

Sandwich is clearly familiar with the trope of Americans as Romans, the simple, hardy people of a young, growing country, and uses it to mock the performance of the untried American troops. Warren's remark about the Roman deployment of troops is quite accurate to the Republican period; the *triarii* described by Polybius were crack veteran units and did indeed deploy at the rear of the army as a reserve; 'going to the *triarii*' referred to any close-run affair. We have only Sandwich's word for Warren's actual opinion.

To be 'Roman', then, is not an unmixed boon – there is much in the Roman character which was felt to be unworthy of the milder, Christian polity of Great Britain, as appears from the division over *delenda est Carthago*. The same balance of admiration for Roman civic patriotism with disturbance at Roman aggression was discussed by John Hill in his antiquities lectures at Edinburgh, as well as by Adam Ferguson in his classes there. However, the very weight of Lord Sandwich's mockery shows how far 'Roman dignity' retained its currency; disturbing militarism outweighed (as it was for Montesquieu) by indefatigability and courage. In any case, a more domestic, civic virtue was also traditionally identified as 'Roman'.

### 12.4.2. Civic virtue?

Despite the merits of the British constitution, widely considered (by the British) the finest in the world, confidence in the moral uprightness of the British people and British politicians was, as plainly appears, not so high. Governor Johnstone, speaking on behalf of the predominantly Loyalist population of Georgia against their inclusion in an anti-American proclamation, avoided the periods of Republican virtue entirely, comparing the state of Britain to that of Rome and Athens at the point of collapse, and himself (indirectly) to Cato and Socrates.

Cato and Socrates in Athens and Rome stood alone to oppose venal
and corrupt majorities. Those celebrated commonwealths, in their
decline, were what Britain is at present. Luxury, venality, public
prostitution, and a total disregard to the interests of their country,
prevailed. Majorities then, as now, were procured by the most base and
scandalous means. Those majorities were composed of the most
worthless and profligate individuals of the community; of gladiators,
pimps, sharpers, parasites and buffoons. Every man in Rome and
Athens almost had his price, and if anything remained unsold it was
only for want of a purchaser. The few who retained any sense of
honour were reviled or despised ... It was the misfortune of the times
that they both fell a sacrifice to the malice of their enemies; but it was
still a greater misfortune that neither of them were survived by the
liberties of their country. Cato and the Roman commonwealth perished
together; the liberties of Athens were no more, when Socrates fell a
victim to his merciless persecutors.\textsuperscript{137}

Johnstone acknowledges the government has a clear majority, both in Parliament and within
the country, but still remains free to attack the moral character of those comprising the
majority; perhaps a comfortable position to occupy, and as Johnstone says one hallowed by
classical precedents. Johnstone appears to acknowledge, like Cato after the battle of Philippi,
that the majority was unconquerable and ruin therefore assured, but will settle for knowing he
is on the side of the angels and will be vindicated by posterity.

Whereas Johnstone thought in 1775 that the end of liberty was already upon Britain, Temple
Luttrell earlier in the same year preferred to place collapse somewhere in the future. For him,
the decline and fall of Rome was Britain's distant future, not its present, and its relevance lay
in the need for friendly young countries to support the metropole in 'some future generation,
when she is verging towards that awful goal which must close her race of glory,' and thereby
avoid the fate of Assyria and Rome. This echoes Bishop Berkeley's 'Verses on the Prospect of
Planting Arts and Learning in America', which represent an early application of the idea of
\textit{translatio imperii}, the passage of world domination from one empire to the next, from Britain
to America.

\begin{quote}
Westward the course of empire takes its way
The first four acts already past
A fifth shall close the Drama with the Day
Time's noblest offspring is the last.
\end{quote}

The idea that Britain was in moral decline, that the greatest days were past and the next turn of
\textsuperscript{137} Almon, \textit{Parliamentary Register} iii 278-80
the *translatio imperii* was approaching, has been a running theme through many of these issues; the endless references to Caesar and the Rubicon, to the civil strife of the Late Republic, the acknowledgements that Roman virtue and pride were not to be expected in these fallen days, all point to a certain pessimism about Britain's moral standing, which even the most perfect constitution could not preserve forever. Lord Lyttelton was also sure that Britain was declining and, unusually, made dire warnings of decline from the government benches, albeit with a different diagnosis of the cause to his colleagues in the Opposition.

I perfectly coincide in the opinion of Cicero, who was an actor in the scenes immediately preceding the destruction concerning [sic] the liberties of Rome, that such an improper licentious use of liberty is totally destructive of its essence. His expression was extremely applicable in the present occasion *immoderata licentia conscionis* [sic]. As well therefore on that account as the general impropriety of such a conduct, I must tell the noble duke [of Manchester] that if he should repeat the same sentiments [that it was impossible not to admire the Americans' defence of their liberty] I mean to ask the House, whether it be consistent with the decorum and dignity of their proceedings to permit such an improper liberty of speech to pass without a proper animadversion and censure.

This is a rare attempt in rhetoric to claim Cicero and the Roman republic for a kind of authoritarian conservatism, where liberty was, as William Adam said a few years later, 'narrow and confined' and the people knew their place. Adam, however, did not consider this a compliment to Rome. For Lyttelton, the constitution is in such danger from excessive liberty that even in the House of Lords expression of overly libertarian views ought to be punished; Manchester is thus linked indirectly with the rabble-rousing populists of the late Roman Republic; Catiline, Clodius and Antony, who used their high position in society to provoke revolution. Lyttelton, of course, omits the difference in cause and effect between the situations; Manchester may be condoning revolution, but there is no suggestion other than the veiled classical allusion that he is leading it – that really would have been unparliamentary language! The definition of 'national character', how it is generated and evolves, is something that was under much discussion in the Scottish moral philosophy classes around this time, and as in Parliament it was carried partly in classical terms – another example of issues in

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139 Almon *Parliamentary Register* v 148
parliamentary debate mirroring, albeit in simplified form, those being taught and discussed in universities.

12.5 Discontinuities between Britain and the Ancient World

All of the above has tended to give the impression that Rome and Britain/America were seen as relatively comparable, even interchangeable. This, however, was not always the case and classical allusions were frequently brought down to earth by questioning their relevance, either in specific cases or in general. We have already seen examples of this, such as Sandwich's mockery of the colonial 'new Romans'. Differences in mores were as commonly alluded to as similarities, and even the similarities were sometimes more hoped for than expected. For every claim that the Romans did such and such there is an opposite statement elsewhere, or sometimes right next to it, that this either didn't work, perhaps still implying an equivalence between Britain and Rome otherwise, or that things have changed too much for the same answers to be applicable.

Some speakers made a more general rule against the use of classical analogies and references, often in slightly mocking fashion. Temple Luttrell reminded the House of one ancient custom that ought perhaps not to be revived, however tempting it might seem:

It was a custom among the ancient Persians to cover their tribunals of justice in the skins of corrupt lawyers, whom they flayed alive. Were a similar custom to prevail within these walls, and the seats around us to be clothed with the skins of corrupt statesmen, I fear, Sir, that there are not a few gentlemen on your right-hand side who would catch their deaths of cold.140

Edmund Burke applied the same sort of critique to a long and involved debate around the testimony of the freshly paroled General Burgoyne, who was an MP in his own right and called as a witness to explain his conduct before and after his disastrous defeat and surrender at Saratoga. Burgoyne, perhaps unwisely, compared himself to Spurius Postumius Albinus, who had surrendered his entire army at the Caudine Forks in 321 BC, and agreed to a humiliating peace, which he had later advised the Senate to repudiate even if it meant handing him over in chains to the enemy as a truce-breaker.141 Burgoyne opened his defence with a

140 Almon, Parliamentary Register v 18  
141 Livy, Ab Urbe Condita IX.8 from Perseus Online Classics Library trans. D.Spillan  
statement that, 'when [classical] allusions tend to excite men's minds to exertions of virtue or policy, I shall never think them pedantic or misplaced', suggesting that the opposite had been recently argued in this or another debate. Burgoyne was one of the minority of MPs in this chapter not to have attended a university, but had been at Westminster School before joining the army, and was a well-read man and successful comic playwright.

The defence of history is similar to that offered by teachers of history – one can imagine Walker or Hill using the same terms defending history classes at Glasgow or Edinburgh against criticism from the philosophy department. Indeed, Walker's defence of the value of classics also talks about the ability of ancient history to promote both virtue and political wisdom, whilst rejecting charges of pedantry. Smyth and, especially, Miller also discuss the risk that their material will be simply a dry recital of facts, and offer their solutions to that danger early and prominently – not least, that historical study can indeed 'excite men's minds to exertions of virtue' if approached correctly.

Alexander Wedderburn further complicated matters by questioning whether Burgoyne, as a paroled prisoner of war, even had a right to speak, citing precedents from English history, but also those of Spurius Postumius and of M. Atilius Regulus, who by the terms of his parole in the First Punic War ought not to have spoken in the Senate other than in the interests of the Carthaginians who had returned him home. Burke, who knew his Roman history at least as well as anyone else in the House, clearly did consider these allusions 'pedantic and misplaced'; after two days of the Committee of Inquiry into Saratoga his reply to Wedderburn included the following brief and crushing remark:

The conduct of war in Rome is indeed a very proper line for ours. It would have been the misfortune of that learned gentleman (Wedderburn) if he had been made a prisoner in those days; to have been set up in a public sale, with his doubts and his ribbons around his neck, and been sold for a slave.144

The reminder of what the Romans usually did with prisoners of war is calculated to undermine the absurdity of referring to specific classical incidents as models of behaviour for modern statesmen. The motif of slavery, particularly as a fate of prisoners as an example of how

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142 Almon, *Parliamentary Register*, viii 323
143 See above, p.168-9
144 Almon, *Parliamentary Register*, viii 357
different Rome was from Britain has already been seen with the image of the Earl of Sandwich as the 'drummer of New York' selling off its defeated inhabitants.

Perhaps the last word on the relative bloodthirstiness of Roman politics belonged to Walter Stanhope, who lamented the lack of consequences which modern ministers faced for even the most disastrous failures,

Sir, in the pure and virtuous times of the Republic, when Rome was Rome, I know that there really was a power in the state, that could make ministers fear and tremble for their responsibility. I have read of ministers that have lost their heads, on account of the civil troubles their oppressive measures have occasioned.

Stanhope is clear in this short fragment that the individual ministers, whatever their faults, are safe from the consequences of their governance, but it is less clear what he means by 'a power in the state.' Judicial executions of failed statesmen and generals were uncommon in Rome, but unofficial or mob violence was less so, accounting for prominent individuals on all sides of political strife, from the reformist Gracchi to the arch-conservative P. Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus. Perhaps Stanhope meant to warn the administration that the next victims of their measures might not be so far away as Boston, and that the prospect of revolution could never be discounted. If anyone in Parliament could be called a serious scholar, Stanhope fits the bill. He has already been discussed in Chapter 5 above, as a dedicated and scholarly undergraduate of the early 1760s, reading Rollin and Livy. This short extract gives us an example of an MP repeating an incident we can be almost sure he read of at university.

Broader criticisms of casual use of classical allusions in debate also tend to centre on the question of whether Britain was actually like Rome at all. Wilkes put it briefly and in moralistic terms in a speech already discussed; '[c]omparisons between that virtuous republic and this corrupt monarchy are usually more brilliant than solid, more beautiful than just.'\textsuperscript{145} The key points are the difference in civic morality, and the form of government, neither of which is uncontroversial. Many of the debates in which the Roman office of dictator was discussed drew on examples from the last years of the Republic, which would be difficult to describe as 'virtuous' without a degree of terminological inexactitude. Many constitutional theorists would have taken issue with characterising Britain as a monarchy in contrast to Rome's 'republican' status; the common view of both as 'mixed' constitutions tended to

\textsuperscript{145} Almon, Parliamentary Register, v 247
emphasise similarities rather than differences, particularly in a debate on the centralisation of executive power.

It is clear, then, that using Rome as an analogue to Britain was not unquestioned or unproblematic in Parliament any more than it was in academia, but the majority of ancient historical allusions appear to pass off without much criticism, suggesting that such questioning was confined to particular cases which were self-evidently inaccurate – details of the laws of war being an obvious example, whereas more 'universal' questions of political principle were not always thought to have changed in the same way. This perhaps reflects the willingness of contemporary political philosophy to demonstrate present issues by reference to the ancient world - even as an example of 'what not to do', that usage often suggests Britain and Rome are in other respects comparable.

12.6 Rhetoric, Style and Persuasion

A final approach which might illuminate the use of classical references and analogies in parliamentary debate is to consider how they fit into the overall structure of a speech or debate; their use in the light of theories of rhetoric and persuasion, particularly what the classical authorities would call *elocutio*, or style of speaking, which is a considerably broader field than is implied by the English 'elocution'. This is a difficult task rendered worse by the incomplete nature of even the best sources available. Accounts of debates which purport to be verbatim are nothing of the sort, as may be seen where several different accounts of the same debate survive.

In terms of speaking style, it has been argued extensively, for example by Howell in the magisterial *Eighteenth Century British Logic and Rhetoric*, that by the eighteenth century a 'plain' style of speaking had become the most theoretically acceptable, with the virtues of clarity highly regarded by a majority of rhetorical theorists. Many, many speeches open with a promise to 'speak plain' and briefly, suggesting that this was a desideratum. On the other hand, these tend to be reacting against expert, particularly especially legal, obscurantism, rather than dizzying rhetoric, such as Barre's opening when discussing Wilkes' Petition 'I will not speak Law, nor will I speak long.' Peter Thomas has given a different and perhaps more

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practical interpretation; the style of speaking was plain because members were too ill-educated to appreciate the higher flights of oratory.\textsuperscript{148}

Classical references, implying scope and breadth of ideas, would not be considered part of the plain style, certainly not if introduced at length. Cicero defined the plain style as being intended to inform, whereas a 'middling' style was supposed to please and satisfy the audience, and the 'grand' or \textit{magniloquens} to persuade by the introduction of high sentiments and ideas.\textsuperscript{149} Allusions to ancient heroism and great events would seem likely to fall into the latter category, although more technical comparisons might belong in the former two. Perhaps for this reason, whilst classical allusions are found on both sides of the House, the most developed excursions into ancient history seem more likely to come from the opposition. A minister in office, or with immediate prospect of it, must be measured and straightforward. His every word may be taken as a statement of government policy, so plain speech is particularly important. As office recedes, rhetoric can become freer. Whilst many voices from the government benches appear in this chapter, few of them appear often, in comparison to the repeated speeches of Luttrell, Burke and Wilkes.

A broad-based statistical analysis of the material drawn upon in Parliamentary debate before the establishment of \textit{Hansard} in its modern form would be an interesting exercise, but the problems of the sources make it chimerical. As well as incomplete, the major sources for the late eighteenth century debates tend to give opposition speeches more prominence than those of government supporters. Time and again the extracts above contain references to previous speakers not recorded in the debate collections. John Almon and William Cobbett, compilers of the main collections, were both considered Radicals and drew their records largely from anti-administration newspapers; in Almon's case his own monthly \textit{Parliamentary Register}; in Cobbett's a variety, but more than any other the \textit{London Evening Post}. These accounts gave greater prominence to the arguments of the opposition than the administration, showing off the brilliance of the opposition's most persuasive speakers.

There is a preponderance of material from the opposition in this study and the sources, but the frequency with which opposition speakers draw on ancient history, particularly in more complex ways, nonetheless appears slightly greater. This is not entirely an artifact of the sources, but also of the different roles being played (as discussed on the previous page); there

\textsuperscript{148} Thomas, \textit{House of Commons} p.80

\textsuperscript{149} G.A.Kennedy, \textit{A New History of Classical Rhetoric} (Princeton, NJ 1994) p.125
is little in the record to demonstrate that ancient history and classical learning were tools of radicalism, nor as Anthony Fletcher (or the *Edinburgh Review*) implies, that they were inherently conservative. Rather, they represented a common language - a mark of belonging in that most gentlemanly of environments, a universally-recognised 'other' for contrast and comparison, a legacy to contest the possession and relevance of, and a model of how the legislator ought to conduct himself.

The balance of classical references between government and opposition, pro- and anti-American standpoints, is relatively even given that the opposition's speeches are generally so much better reported. This reinforces the idea that having classical authority for one's views was a valuable rhetorical currency. It also calls into question claims that Roman history, and classics more generally, was intrinsically conservative or radical, though both claims may be found in works contemporary and modern. Womersley's concern that ancient history could be seen as radicalising and dangerous might be echoed by some of the cases brought up by Opposition figures. Equally, ancient history appears as a stabilising force, full of examples of the need to be grave, moderate and mindful of authority and tradition. If ancient history could serve only one side of such debates, it could not have been so widely taught across universities with very different student bases and educational priorities. Rather, because ancient history was both politically significant and highly contestable, it was all the more necessary that it be taught, not simply read – to ensure that students drew, if not 'the right' conclusions, at least not the 'wrong' ones from controversial and even radical reading – a concern made explicit by, among others, William Smyth and, in a theological context, George Campbell.¹⁵⁰

¹⁵⁰ For discussion of Smyth see mainly pp.86-88 above. Campbell's attempt to guide students to the 'right' books is discussed pp.176-7.
Chapter 12 - Burke and India: Imperialism and the construction of character

The name of Edmund Burke has run through the previous chapter like 'Blackpool' through the proverbial stick of rock. Yet, very much in the manner of a Roman statesman, Burke saw himself not only as a senator but as a prosecutor of abuses in government, particularly the government of Britain's empire. The ultimate expression of this self-construction was the impeachment of Warren Hastings in 1787-95, which Burke and his contemporaries saw, as Burke intended, very much in the image of Cicero's prosecution of Verres. Larger concerns about the new-found need in the late eighteenth century to govern a large and diverse empire beyond the seas, naturally looked to the successful precedent of the Roman Empire, which similarly integrated its continent-spanning territories into an apparently coherent whole. Burke represents a particularly knowledgeable and conscious case of an imperial ruling class which was already beginning to see itself in Roman terms – hence, for example, the spread of the term 'proconsul' to refer to high British officials in the Victorian period.

Burke's classical learning was deep and broad; he had studied at Trinity College Dublin when the Latin side was steeped in ancient history and political philosophy, and particularly in the works of Cicero – it is not coincidental that a rare Trinity Dublin man in the pre-1801 Parliament was among the most frequent, accurate and thoughtful in his use of classical examples and ideas. No other parliamentary figure of the period combines Burke's classical erudition with his corpus of surviving writings and speeches. For Stanhope and Lord North, the brothers Luttrell, Adam and Dundas, the sole figure of Burke stands here as an example of how thoroughly a career and the public understanding of a vital issue could be based on the ancient models he studied at university.

Burke was undeniably vastly more talented than most of his contemporaries as an orator and author, but the previous chapter shows that others shared his ambition, and attempted to draw on the ancient world as he did – his oratory is not of a wholly different type to other Opposition figures, merely better, and much better-recorded. For example, Burke's contemporary at Trinity College, Colonel Isaac Barre, was also widely admired as a parliamentary orator – not in Burke's class perhaps, but another reliably strong performer for the Opposition. However, whereas Burke's published speeches alone fill multiple volumes, Barre's survive only in collections of parliamentary debates. Nor was any speech of Lord

\[151\] For the curriculum Burke would have followed see above, ch.4 pp.95-6
North ever published as a pamphlet or posthumously from his papers. The range and depth of source material relating to Burke, not the absolute quality or depth of classical learning inherent in his work, make him uniquely suitable for a study such as this.

It has already been seen that in many ways the British Empire was conceived of and presented as the 'New Rome'. However, in the case of America this was a vague analogy; important, but always open to criticism on grounds of historical accuracy; the Roman colony was not at all the same concept as the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English colony. In many ways, the analogy is more applicable to the 'Second British Empire', where the American colonies are the first, the colonial empire in the modern sense which began in India in the mid-eighteenth century and continued, spreading across the non-Western world, until after the Second World War. It was the Victorians who wrote in detail and with passion about Britain's place in the *translatio imperii*, who expressed their concerns and delights of empire in the classicising tone acquired in public schools and resurgent universities. A recent book about the Classics and India places the British preoccupation with themselves as the heirs of Rome, as imperial rulers and administrators over barbarian peoples, in the 1860s-80s.

Whilst this and the previous chapter provide limited evidence for a conscious identification of Britain and Rome a century earlier, there is perhaps not the same sense of Britain as Rome's heir to world-empire; the parallels more often brought out in the last chapter are of liberty and steadfastness, rather than *parcere victis, debellare superbos*. Perhaps the main frame through which the merits and purpose of the British Empire in India were discussed in the late eighteenth century is the question of how far British possessions automatically fell under British, or rather English, laws and customs; how 'integrated' legal and government systems ought to be. The extreme 'interventionist' or 'reformist' view, not perhaps yet articulated at this time, appears in the works of James Mill or Jeremy Bentham; that Indian institutions should be cast aside wholesale and replaced by 'rational' ones imported from Europe and further improved upon by rational, dispassionate governors. The extreme opposite view would be that there should be no Empire at all as every people ought to live under 'their own' laws and rulers; this is equally rarely seen. In fact, neither extreme was to become part of the political mainstream until well into the nineteenth century, but

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152 P.Vasunia, *The Classics and Colonial India* (Oxford 2013) p.135


Bearce in *British Attitudes Towards India* draws a distinction between a 'conservative' view of India entailing the maximum possible respect for Indian laws, institutions and mores consonant with maintaining British strategic and commercial interests, and a 'liberal' view that India ought to be modernised along thoroughly Enlightened lines.\(^{155}\)

This tension may be seen clearly in the early debates over Indian reform which led to the introduction of Fox's India Bill. A discussion of petitions from the East India Company for a reforming Act in 1781 drew fierce discussion of the merits of the still rather new Supreme Court at Calcutta, which operated more or less under English law. Nathaniel Wraxall, who had experience of India as he had been in the East India Company service at Bombay from 1769-72, made the analogy between British India and the far-flung dominions of Rome, where local customs were respected and consequently the Empire much beloved of its subjects:

> Mr Wraxall … remarked the folly and absurdity of transplanting their courts of justice and acts of Parliament at a distance of 5000 miles, to a country totally dissimilar in religion, in laws, in customs, and in feelings of every nature, and which had been so since the most remote antiquity. He said this conduct had no precedent in the annals of Rome, or any nation of antiquity renowned for policy and wisdom. Rome had opened her generous arms to all conquered nations; she had adopted with a masculine and conciliating policy all the customs, religious or civil, of the vanquished provinces; she respected even their prejudices; she consequently was beloved and respected on the banks of the Tagus or Euphrates as much as on the Arno or the Tiber.\(^{156}\)

Boughton Rouse, seconding General Smith's motion, made a similar point in the same debate, distinguishing between the nearer possessions of Rome, in Italy, southern Gaul and so on, to which 'she gave her laws, if the people wished to receive them, or allured them by immunities and honourable distinctions,' whereas in far-flung territories the situation was quite different:

> In her distant conquests she pursued a very different policy. In these she was satisfied to hold the supreme government, to possess the revenues and the military power, leaving the inhabitants to conduct their internal police by their native magistrates and laws. Nor did that wise nation insult the religion or prejudices of the vanquished. I think the first instance of communicating the Roman laws to the distant provinces of the Empire happened under the reign of one of those

\(^{155}\) G.D.Bearce, *British Attitudes Towards India, 1784-1858* (Oxford 1962) p.71

\(^{156}\) J.Almon & J.Debrett, *Parliamentary Register* (new series, 45vols, London 1781-96) i 456
monsters … Caracalla, around 1000 years after the building of the city.\(^{157}\)

So far, so similar, though Rouse identifies more explicitly what he thinks the main priorities of Britain in India ought to be: supreme government, revenues and military power – more or less what the East India Company possessed in Bengal after the Battle of Plassey, hence the lack of need for change.

In latter times, indeed, Justinian, that legislator so much praised by his posterity for his compilations of jurisprudence, committed the same blunder which we are now committing in our country. He thought of the Roman law as many good and well-meaning men may think of our English laws: that they are the best in the world, that laws good in the west must necessarily be good in the East, and in that belief he established this confused system, which had been formed at different periods of time and had grown up under the progressive situations of the Roman state in Italy … as the universal rule of right and wrong throughout the provinces of the eastern empire, for which it was in no way adapted.\(^{158}\)

Had Rouse possessed a copy of James Mill's *History of British India*, which almost forty years later called for root-and-branch reform of Indian institutions along rational lines, this could not have been a more pointed critique of it.\(^{159}\) Plenty of speakers in this debate had pointed to the superiority of English law; Rouse refers to the 'expectation of many good men that an English court … would rescue the natives from oppression' and this view was partially maintained by North in an effort not to take sides. North acknowledged that the British laws might be 'unintelligible' to the Indians, but also insisted that a court which 'would hold out equal justice to the native and European' was needed and must therefore apply equitable (i.e. British) law.\(^{160}\) Burke argued that the petitions might well 'criminate the judges of the court' but if the judges might be personally guilty this did not, as a previous speaker had implied, invalidate petitioners' concerns.\(^{161}\)

Respect for Indian institutions as adapted to Indian conditions was to become a centrepiece of Burke's critique of Warren Hastings, and of British conduct in India in general, and contributed a strand to critiques of colonialism and the 'civilising mission'; albeit not until recently particularly prominent, perhaps because of the ease with which 'Indian institutions,

\(^{157}\) Ibid. i 451
\(^{158}\) Ibid. i 452
\(^{159}\) See for example the discussion of Mill in Bearce, *British Attitudes Towards India*, pp.70-3
\(^{160}\) Almon & Debrett, *Parliamentary Register* n.s. i 455
\(^{161}\) Ibid. i 457
whether rational in a utilitarian sense or not, are Indian and we have no right (or need) to change them' can be misrepresented as, conceal, or slide into, 'Indians are incapable of adapting to “our civilised institutions” so might as well be left with theirs.'

The whole offers an interesting contrast to debates over the Quebec Bill several years earlier, when the same question of whether English law's superiority outweighed a conquered people's right to their own laws had been raised. North had been strongly in favour of the Quebecois retaining French civil law, and of a prominent role for the Catholic Church; Burke had opposed both in strong language. This might indicate that the American war had changed perceptions of how closely-integrated the Empire ought to be, or that to some minds Popery was more threatening than Hinduism or Islam. The Quebec Bill cut across other divides in that it satisfied neither pro-American figures, who saw it as tyrannical in denying 'the liberties of English law' and particularly the lack of a provincial assembly, nor parliamentary supremacists who were disturbed by the establishment of French civil law and its potential to lead to a semi-detached piece of empire. All could profess to be horrified by the quasi-Establishment of Catholicism. India could not raise the same concern as a 'bad example' to other parts of the Empire, or the beginning of a slippery slope to tyranny, as the absence of English law would tend to frustrate, rather than enable, power grabs by central government.

This concern for the dignity and fitness of Indian institutions is often identified as a common thread running through Edmund Burke's long connection with India. What Bearce calls the 'conservative' view of India, as a cash cow from which the East India Company extracted the maximum income for the minimum of trouble and outright oppression, was dominant in British politics until after the Napoleonic Wars. However, Burke was unusual in the degree to which he wanted India left alone. Indeed, one might think the conservative/liberal dichotomy used by Bearce owes more to the prominence of Burke and Mill at opposite extremes than to any congruence with broader ideological trends.

Warren Hastings was no James Mill avant le lettre to root up the established order in India, merely considerably more interventionist than his critics liked – though it is important to note with his biographer P.J. Marshall that no other Governor-General for several decades after followed a markedly different policy, save for a greater or lesser degree of belligerence.

162 The Quebec Bill occupies most of Simmons & Thomas, Debates Respecting North America iv
towards the Indian states, and perhaps a more Victorian attitude to fiscal corruption, as ideas about fiscal probity evolved. Indeed, Hastings commissioned late in life a compilation of 'Hindu Laws' which John Brockington argues was intended as the beginnings of a reform of the East India Company to operate according to Indian legal principles. P.J. Marshall goes so far as to argue, albeit on no real evidence beyond the fact of Hastings having attended a school with a classical reputation, that Hastings was an admirer of the cosmopolitan Roman approach to empire, quoting an early letter by Hastings that 'the wisest and most permanent states have ever left to conquered nations the exercise of their own laws.'

Yet the purpose of this section is not to hash over Burke's political philosophy again, still less that of Warren Hastings; the last word on that topic may be yet to come, but it will have to wait a little longer. Rather, all the above serves to demonstrate that Burke was part of a broader conversation which saw Britain's empire as best served by imitating the best aspects of Rome, or at least saw Rome as a valid source of precedents and advice on how to run – and how not to run – a global empire.

This is not the first work to note the striking similarities between Burke's impeachment of Warren Hastings and Cicero's prosecution of Verres, the Roman governor of Sicily, in 70BC. Indeed, Burke himself mentioned the similarity several times, and consciously modelled parts of his speeches on those of Cicero. For example, in a celebrated passage introducing his Motion for Papers relating to Hastings' governance, Burke points out that:

The downfall of the greatest Empire this world ever saw has been, on all hands, agreed to have originated in the maladministration of its provinces. Rome never felt within herself the seeds of decline till corruption from foreign sources endangered her vitals … but even then a man of the first families, connections and rank in the State was brought to punishment. Verres the governor of Sicily was accused by Cicero for the mal-administration of the province committed to his care. The connections of the accused were some of the most splendid and opulent of Rome; amongst these were the Hortensii and even the Metelli. It was not a party for or against the Government, it was the Government itself that adopted the prosecution and no less than 150 brothers Metellus were designated to chair the principal courts in the year 69; had the trial continued into the new year they were expected to secure Verres' acquittal.

166 Q. Hortensius Hortalus was an eminent orator a generation Cicero's elder, and led Verres' defence; the two
days were allotted to the accuser, to collect materials for his accusation … the Roman senate allowed not only the time for digesting the matter of all the accusations, but also opened without reserve all the cabinets which contained the documents the accuser asked for … The time was when the Rt Hon gentleman opposite, the Cicero of our age [Mr Dundas] was fully apprised of the miseries which dealt in that unhappy country I allude to, and which has been so repeatedly … the wretched victim of avarice.167

This passage sharply contrasts the treatment of Cicero's prosecution with that Burke is receiving; the impeachment managers never got full access to all the papers they wanted, many of which did not exist, a problem also faced by Cicero. In fact, Burke is manipulating the circumstances of Verres' trial to fit his own better. Cicero did indeed have 150 days to prepare his evidence, but this was granted not out of generosity but to make sure his prosecution ran out of time before the end of the year and thus amounted to nothing. The actual process had to be completed in 50 days, and even that risked unacceptable delay. The prosecution was, far from being 'adopted by the government' until Cicero's victory was clearly imminent, much hampered by such delaying tactics if Cicero's account can be relied upon.168

Several months later, Burke was keen to play up the differences between his situation and Cicero's, rather than the similarities. Fragmentary notes on his speech on the Rohilla War list eight key differences which make Burke's job the harder: the Roman empire was smaller and had one lingua franca spoken almost everywhere, most provinces had powerful countrymen or at least patrons in Rome, the Romans considered prosecuting abuses an honourable way for a young politician to win advancement, prosecutions could be placed directly in the hands of victims, and proconsuls were personally liable for their actions.169 Against all these disadvantages, Burke could only set the sympathetic capacity and legislative authority of the House of Commons, appealing to the House to lift themselves above the moral level of the Roman Republic, and to do the right thing.

Over 100 years ago, H.V. Canter produced a point-by-point comparison between Cicero's and Burke's speeches, and there is no need to recreate his work at length.170 Rather, the crucial

167 Burke, 'Speech on Motion for Papers relating to Hastings'; 20 February 1786, in Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke vi.63
169 Burke, 'Rohilla War Speech notes' 1 June 1786, in Writings and Speeches vi.93
point here is not the parallels between Hastings' government and Verres' – it suffices that they were identified at length by Burke, and broadly recognised as a reasonable if not accurate standard of comparison by his contemporaries – the Public Advertiser, for example, produced in 1786 a week-long series of editorials comparing Verres and Hastings, whilst a series of cartoons of similar date show Burke as a bespectacled, rather podgy Cicero orating in the Forum with a quote from the opening of In Verrem 1 adapted to Warren Hastings. Geoffrey Carnall has addressed a similar theme more recently with his essay 'Burke as Modern Cicero', ranging widely across political philosophy as well as the rhetoric of the Hastings trial. Burke was not the only parliamentarian of the period to model himself on Cicero. Sir William Jones in the 1780s advised his former pupil Viscount Althorp, then at Cambridge, to emulate Cicero if he wanted to reach 'by study and exercise, so noble an object as that of making a shining figure in Parliament', and sent him by way of illustration Cicero's philosophical writings and his speeches in 20 volumes.

What is of more immediate interest is the idea that Burke was consciously presenting himself as Cicero, or at least as the version of Cicero he thought had existed, under the influence of his classical education and of Middleton's biography. The biographical similarities would already have been striking. Burke referred to himself as a novus homo, a 'new man'. The term, in Republican Rome, referred specifically to a man who was the first of his descent to enter the Senate, a description which fit Burke perfectly, and carried connotations of both the old-fashioned, honourable backwoodsman (the image of the mid-eighteenth-century 'country member') and of carpetbagging, potentially destabilising ambition. The latter characterisation was an easy one to level at Burke, a provincial nobody, an Irishman, the son of the sort of petty attorney he was the first to stigmatise as grasping, ignorant pot-stirrers, and the ally of richer, more aristocratic men as whose paid minion he was liable to be seen. Cicero, however, had dealt with the same criticisms, and was nonetheless remembered as Rome's greatest orator and politician – indeed, the only non-military Roman of the Republic anyone, then or now, was likely to be able to name. As Conyers Middleton in the preface to his life of Cicero referred to his education inspiring him with partisan feelings towards the ghosts of the Roman Republic, it is not unreasonable to imagine a young Burke, or indeed an old Burke, under the influence of a profoundly Ciceronian education, seeing himself as a new Cicero,

171 G. Carnall, 'Burke as Modern Cicero' in Carnall & Nicolson (eds) The Impeachment of Warren Hastings pp.76-89
172 Discussed in detail by Reid, Imprison'd Wranglers pp.119-122 and 126-43
174 Ibid. ii 581
and even Cicero as Burke in a toga.¹⁷⁵

Like Cicero, Burke had a philosophical reputation alongside his oratory. Indeed, universal admiration for Cicero the practical moralist and popular philosopher was rather higher than the distinctly mixed opinions generated by his political conduct. Montesquieu described Cicero as incurably vain and prone to sudden enthusiasms; Nathaniel Hooke saw him as inconsistent and dishonest. However, Cicero's political activities did find powerful defenders in Conyers Middleton and Voltaire, who accorded his hero the signal honour of being played by the author in his tragedy Rome Sauvée, ou Catilina.¹⁷⁶ Burke like Cicero, particularly like Cicero as presented by Conyers Middleton, made of political pragmatism a virtue, but married to great realism a capacity for ill-judged idealism. Cicero had reconciled himself to oligarchy, and to Caesar, but had also taken swings at Sulla at the beginning of his career, and laboured to restore the Republic at the very end, after almost everyone else had given up. And he had taken on Verres, and won, founding his career and reputation on that victory. When Burke talked of wanting to be remembered by posterity for prosecuting Hastings, did he have Cicero's vindication by history in mind? After all, Clodius had come out of his encounters with Cicero no better in the long run than Verres, despite his success in sending Cicero into exile, and Cicero's total failure to get his murderer acquitted.

The trajectory of Burke's career, again like Cicero's, has been seen as contradictory. In Cicero's case, how did the populist who attacked the great oligarchs (including Verres) become the vacillating elder statesman who surrendered to Julius Caesar and was thoroughly hoodwinked by Octavian? In Burke's, how could he support the American columnists, attack Hastings, yet condemn the French Revolution and become remembered principally as 'the father of Conservatism'? In both cases, it has been suggested that what holds their apparently disparate philosophies together is a regard for established liberties, whoever they belong to and wherever they originally come from. For Cicero, Verres was as subversive of the constitution as Clodius, despite the fact that one was of the optimate (oligarchical) faction and the other a popularis. Cicero's duty, as he saw it, was always to do as much as he could to preserve the existing constitution, or restore it to its roots, and whilst he did not always have the power or intestinal fortitude to do it, there is no necessary contradiction in his

¹⁷⁵ C.Middleton, History of the Life of M. Tullius Cicero (2vols, London 1741) i (xvi)
philosophy.177

Conor Cruise O'Brien identifies a similar trend in Burke; that he saw 'Indianism', 'Jacobitism' and the oppression of Ireland as strands of the same oppressive way of thinking which ignored the human and the particular.178 This interpretation places at the centre of Burke's career a concern for the particular rights of separate peoples to live under their own laws and institutions. The theme of Indian law runs throughout the Hastings trial; Burke insisted time and again that both Hindus and Muslims were peoples of law, with sophisticated codes and legal systems as ancient, worthy and respected as anything in Europe. Whole days of oratory passed in discussion of how tightly these 'heathen' rulers were bound by law and custom. Hastings' attitude on this point was somewhat contradictory; on the one hand he commissioned a collection, mentioned above, of 'Hindu laws'; on the other, Burke made hay with Hastings' occasional expressions of disdain for 'Oriental despotism'.179

Burke referred again to Cicero's example, this time not just the Verres trial but Cicero's own experience as a provincial governor in Cilicia, lamenting Hastings' lack of education as, had he been fitly brought up to run an Empire, he would have gone to a proper University 'where arbitrary power I hope will never be heard of, but true principles of religion, liberty and law will ever, I hope, be inculcated.'180 A Hastings with this background to draw on would have quoted the example of Cicero in his Government' and thus been fitter for his office – one of the first examples of the long history the Universities, especially Oxford, were to have as nurseries of Imperial administrators. This is a rare concrete example of a statesman, rather than an educationalist, making the case for University education and particularly the Classics; an ounce of Burke here is worth at least a pound of Knox, and from the stranglehold exerted first on the Honourable East India Company Service and then the Indian Civil Service by Oxford men that ounce might be said to have gone a long way.

The similarity in political outlook between Burke and Cicero which made the appeal to the Verrine Orations so irresistible might be summed up in a remark by his biographer, F.P. Lock,

177 J.W. Atkin, 'A revolutionary doctrine? Cicero's natural right teaching in Mably and Burke' in Classical Receptions Journal vol. 6 no.2 pp.177-204 argues that Cicero's balance between pragmatism and absolute natural right was made to serve reactionary ends in Reflections on the Revolution in France, but does not consider Burke's impeachment speeches as a possible counter-case.
179 Burke, 'Opening of Impeachment', 15-19 February 1788, in Speeches and Writings vi 410-20
180 Ibid. vi 367
that what Burke really sought in his contribution to Fox's India Bill was 'a return to a prelapsarian state'. This has often been said of Cicero also, usually as a criticism; that he had no programme of reform to save the republic, merely a return to what had in truth vanished forever. As with his owning of the term *novus homo*, Burke may well have taken inspiration from Cicero in his successful attempt to articulate the necessity of a pragmatic return to, or adherence to, the old ways – a balance between, to stick to the Republican theme, the blind reaction of a Cato and the cynical combination of nostalgia and revolutionary power-grabbing represented by Octavian.

Once again, the construction of character lies at the centre of the political use of ancient history. Burke does not, as Smith and Wraxall do, simply look to the ancient world for examples of what to do, although he is quite capable of doing so. Rather, he uses the shared thought-world of ancient history to normalise his highly individualistic approach to politics, to, as Peter Marshall put it, bring the exotic world of India into the familiar, and his approach to solving its problems into the accepted, canonical view of duty, historical progression and morality. As Cicero exhorted the Senate to show the Republican virtue he privately believed it had lost, so Burke challenged Parliament to live up to the high principles they had absorbed in school and university.

The valency of ancient history in this period as a part of political discourse is thus greater than has been previously assumed; the depth of not just Burke's but Britain's debt to the Roman concept of empire having not previously been discussed in relation to such an early period. However, and notwithstanding the opening of this chapter, it would be equally dangerous to overstate that influence. Burke was an outstanding figure for his automatic command of the classical world, and his comrade Temple Luttrell, who was even more prone to classical references, lasted only one term. Whoever told Burgoyne his classical allusions were misplaced probably represented far more members than appear here.

Yet for all that, ancient history was far from unimportant. The range of allusions seen in the previous 60 pages is considerable, as is the selection of issues to which they were applied. Gentlemen did not necessarily have (or use) the classical education that was supposedly the mark of upper-class manhood, but they knew they ought to have it, and could be embarrassed

181 Lock, *Edmund Burke* i 528
182 Rawson, *Cicero* pp.146-61
by those who did and showed it. If serious scholars were pointing out the differences between Rome and Britain on an internal level, those scholars had yet to penetrate the general feeling held over from an older, humanist tradition that the two remained comparable, and considerations of economics and constitutional niceties seemed in any case less relevant to questions of imperial law, right and administration. As we saw with the case of Wilkes in Chapter 10, ancient examples were considered more applicable to the general case and the grand scale than to particulars, where domestic precedent and immediate expediency were considered more persuasive.
Concluding Remarks

The gradual and halting evolution of history into a subject that was not only 'read' but 'taught' as a part of university learning in Britain can be said to have begun, and made considerable progress, in the eighteenth century, despite a couple of minor steps in that direction in the 1620s. The process was not, in any sense, 'complete' until the middle of the nineteenth century, with the establishment of the modern *Literae Humaniores* degree course at Oxford, and of similar courses at Cambridge and elsewhere, in the middle of the nineteenth century. However, despite the non-curricular status of ancient history in the eighteenth-century university, it grew in status and permanence, reflecting a growth in schoolboy reading of ancient history on the one hand, and of its use in increasingly public political debates on the other. The whole thrust of this thesis has tended to counter the triumphalist Victorian narrative of the 'unreformed universities' which were incapable of change until dragged kicking and screaming into modernity between 1850-80, and the modified Scottish form of the same narrative, which projects back the scientific and medical focus of Edinburgh and Glasgow, and tends to elide the importance of teaching in the humanities outside the specific case of Political Economy. There was a clear recognition in the eighteenth century that ancient history belonged as part of university education, both in its own right and as a part of the curriculum. That education more generally was not merely a continuation of previous trends, but was consistently and thoughtfully interrogated and discussed.

Tracing developments in the study of ancient history as a part of the eighteenth-century university experience helps to explain the nature of such an education and to address the question of whether those values were more widely relevant to broader eighteenth-century intellectual life. It is difficult to say whether the increased interest in teaching ancient history was a cause or consequence of its increased importance in wider historiography and the public sphere, but there is clearly a general increase.

Ancient history in the eighteenth century was undeniably a component in a 'liberal education', whether that was the comprehensive survey of the progress of learning envisioned by George Turnbull, the balance of utility and abstraction we find in Vicesimus Knox, or the pure mental gymnastics of Edward Copleston. In the more abstract ideas of liberality, the function of history in general was perhaps best articulated by George Miller at Trinity College Dublin; it was through a rigorous study of comparative history that the ends of what was called in
Scotland 'moral philosophy' could be arrived at: a comprehensive understanding of the fundamental principles of politics and policy, and a source of guidance for ethics in public life. We might take this as one way of teaching ancient history as an independent subject, the general outline course surveying the shape of Western history, demonstrating the teacher's conception of the motive forces behind society. Due to the greater popularity of other ways of investigating the roots of society and modernity, especially moral philosophy, this is really seen only in Miller's lectures, which drew relatively little on ancient history, and was thus probably the least significant of the uses of ancient history discussed here.

At Oxford, however, ancient history blended seamlessly into the Classics curriculum which was Copleston's paradigm of liberal mental training. This was not the sweeping universal or philosophic history of a Mackie or a Miller, but a much more particular approach based on close reading of particular authors with, as far as we can tell, considerable attention to antiquarian detail as well as moral exempla. The case for close-reading as liberal mental training is essentially that made more widely for classics as the prototypical liberal education, but for historical readings one can add the practical utility of the study of history thrown in, as it were, as a bonus.

After Dodwell's deprivation in 1688, we see relatively little very close reading of particular texts, whether ancient or modern, as historical sources, except in particular cases of college teaching at Oxford and Cambridge. Some of that is doubtless an artifact of our relative ignorance of how college teaching at Oxford and Cambridge usually worked – that would be the most likely venue for such reading, which may well have extended considerably beyond the 'mere' language study which we know occurred. Chinnery hints, for example, at a broadly historical reading of the classics in his brief discussion of examinations on Virgil. One of the few examples of such close reading of a historical text is Bennett on Tacitus' Germania – treating it as a founding text of the 'Gothic constitution' and thus a preeminent example both of seeking classical authority for modern innovation and of using Rome as an 'other' against which to contrast modern England.

On the other side of Knox's balance, a utilitarian case could also be made for the study of ancient history either on its own or as a subsidiary and preliminary study to other disciplines. History could be seen, especially in Scotland but also in England - as for example in the statutes encouraging BCL students to study history - as providing the 'raw material' for
philosophy or for law. Ancient history was particularly suitable for this for a number of reasons: it was the common heritage of Western Europe and thus would be recognised as evidence and example by foreign scholars; Roman law was the foundation of the civil law, and it stood at a protective remove from the most immediate political implications of academic speculation. Adam Ferguson in particular used Roman history in this way, drawing his distinction between 'history' as the study of particulars and 'science' on generalities, each reliant on the other. However, even those moral philosophers, such as Dugald Stewart, who denied the relevance of ancient history to present concerns drew on it extensively for their case studies in earlier stages of social and economic development, and thus remained influenced by their understanding of how Greco-Roman society had worked. Reference to ancient history could support the legitimacy of other subjects, from anatomy to common law. This status of history as a preliminary to more 'theoretical' subjects was its common standing in the Scottish universities, whether in the form of antiquities, or of universal history lectures.

The traditional use of history as a *speculum principis* extended to an ever-wider range of 'princes' - anyone who might be expected to play a part in public life, whether the prospective ministers of state at Christ Church or the future aldermen of Glasgow, could argue that they ought to study history to fit them for that role. This case was made explicit at Glasgow by Walker, and further up the social spectrum, at Cambridge by Smyth, who essentially gave his students a guide to reading, and trusted that reading good books with advice on how to interpret them would allow them to form their own sound ideas without further input from him. The last part of this thesis demonstrates the truth of that traditional claim for the merits of history; ancient history for the statesman was much more than a mark of upper-class acculturation, or the source of a nebulous and idealised 'classical republicanism', though both of these were important. It was also a constant source of practical (if contested) precedents, examples and case studies in the problems of government, liberty and empire.

This balance of purposes and goals may be clearly seen in how (and what) ancient history was taught. Across the board, most of the ancient history taught is that of the Roman Republic, more seldom of the Empire, still less of Greece or late antiquity, though Greek history becomes more common late in the century with the general improvement of Greek language skills among students. The Republic offered a ready comparator for Britain, a scene of political liberty and free political actors, as well as setting a high moral tone and a wide range of sources. The 'enlightened narrative' of the republic's decline was played out in
lecture courses, with varying degrees of sophistication, even as it was being refined outside the academy.

By the end of the period we can see other innovations in historiography pioneered in the mid-century starting to show in teaching. At the schoolboy level, Goldsmith in his abbreviation of his own work tried to counter 'revisionists' such as Nathaniel Hooke before children could graduate to reading them, preemptively putting forward the 'conventional' view in strong terms and with the existence of controversies elided. In universities, Miller at Trinity and Smyth at Cambridge introduced their students to the disagreements of their illustrious predecessors, and the latter and George Campbell of Aberdeen even invited them to form their own opinions. Late antiquity, skimmed over if covered at all by earlier teachers, begins around the start of the nineteenth century to adopt a major place in lecture courses. Even Knight's painfully abbreviated Aberdeen courses had room for Justinian and Belisarius alongside the Goths and Franks, whilst Miller and Smyth discuss the late Roman and Byzantine states at length.

This reflects the continuing ambiguity of the term 'ancient history'. Miller and Smyth were both avowedly giving courses of 'modern history' but chose to begin in the late Roman empire, in what we would now probably consider part of ancient history. Bennet at Cambridge traced 'modern' political institutions to the first century AD. For Charles Mackie, however, 'modern history' did not begin until the Reformation. Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* could be seen as stretching ancient history to 1453, or as beginning modern history with Marcus Aurelius. There was clearly a defined body of knowledge called 'Roman history' but this could be variously categorised within 'history' as a whole, a process which reflects how immediately significant the history of Rome especially, and to a lesser extent that of Greece, could be.

As well as the blurring together of periods and divides within history, there is an important element of what we would now call interdisciplinary connections in the teaching of ancient history throughout this period. As we have seen, the teaching of ancient history often did not take place in a subject called 'ancient history' but formed part of either a formally undifferentiated course of 'classical' or 'humane' studies in the English universities and Dublin, or fell under a variety of other subject headings in Scotland, especially Moral Philosophy and Humanity, and to a lesser extent Law and Divinity. History also had its own
supporting fields of geography and chronology, which were taught before or alongside it in various contexts. The exact boundaries of ancient history are thus difficult to assign, but this overlap helps to erode the binary contrast between the English, classical university and the Scottish, philosophical one. As in many things, Trinity College Dublin provides an explicit meeting-point, Miller's 'philosophy of history' neatly marrying the form of Smyth's lectures on history at Cambridge with the concerns of Scotland's moral philosophers.

The eighteenth century began with a remarkable increase in the provision for history, both ancient and modern, in universities. From one chair and one personal lectureship, at Oxford and Glasgow respectively, in 1700, to eight chairs, adding three of Church History, one of Civil, three of Modern, by 1730. By 1760 there were ten, excluding a couple of assistantships and lectureships, plus the separation of History and Oratory at Dublin. Much of the formal, university-based provision proved unwanted or unstable; there is no record at all of History being taught at St Andrews, that at Glasgow and, on the University level, Oxford remained irregular to the very end of the period. Marischal's was basic, the Dublin professor lectured little, and the Professorships at Edinburgh and Cambridge relied on the attractiveness and energy of an individual professor appointed by a frequently unsatisfactory process. However, there was clearly an increase in the amount of history being taught, not only as a vital component of other studies but as a subject in its own right and even one which could begin, as in Miller and Millar's cases, to annex the curricular territory of allied subjects.

On the whole, this study has inevitably tended to minimise rather than maximise national differences, and differences within nations. England, Scotland and Dublin remained three very different models of university learning. Oxford and Cambridge, whilst their honours system examined different subjects and material, had a similar place and level of provision for ancient history. However, the whole ethos of the Scottish universities was almost as totally different as the conventional view of the 'Scottish Enlightenment' versus 'port and prejudice' would suggest. The idea of a Scottish 'democratic intellect' could certainly be supported by the broad-strokes version of history taught for essentially civic, ethical reasons. In other words, the admittedly sketchy coverage of ancient history by Knight of Aberdeen, John Millar of Glasgow, John Hill of Edinburgh or various moral philosophy professors would represent a common, expected minimum of knowledge possessed by an educated Scot.

In England, the same certainty did not exist. A gentleman ought to know the history of Rome,
and perhaps even that of Greece, but there could be no expectation of his having been taught it. Even if he attended university, some colleges taught a great deal, some almost nothing. The change from 'reading' history to 'teaching' history had clearly begun (Scott, Smyth and Bennet all evidence this in different ways) but was not to find lasting form in England until Oxford adopted the essentially modern form of Literae Humaniores in 1829 and 1850, with ancient history and philosophy the crowning portion of the Classics degree.¹

Two conclusions follow from these observations. In the narrow university sphere, we might look at Trinity College Dublin for a potential synthesis of the Scottish and English university systems, including in the teaching of ancient history. Like the Scots, Trinity had a fixed and rigorous curriculum which incorporated a considerable measure of 'science', that is, modern learning, although it was not always followed in full or in the 'correct' order. The 'collegiate' structure was Scots in that it was a university of one college, like King's Aberdeen and Glasgow, but the Statutes were those issued by Archbishop Laud and not dissimilar to those of English colleges of similar date. The classical side of the curriculum is not dissimilar to that adopted by Christ Church in the mid-century eighteenth century when there was one set reading-list, though balanced by a similar weight of work on the 'science' side, which was lighter at Oxford. Dublin did feature more history to less poetry, compared to Christ Church at that time, but had converged with Christ Church by the 1790s, and also with the formally-imposed reading lists at Magdalen (Oxford). If we imagine an Oxford where the Laudian statutes had been used to impose a single curriculum in philosophy and classics on the colleges, preparing for an examination whose rigour never declined, it might have looked rather like Trinity Dublin.

On the national scale, the study of ancient history in public life in Part IV shows its place as important, but not central, to public discourse. Reference to ancient history displayed the background and education of a gentleman, whilst drawing on commonly-recognised classical personae could inflate the significance of a point, speaker or issue among an elite audience. However, reference to the ancient world was not purely rhetorical and there is some evidence that the responses to the problems of the Roman Republic and empire were considered as plausible options for the British state, and evaluated in debate as such. The precise connection between university study and such uses of ancient history is difficult to define, but the great

¹ R.Jenkyns 'Classical Studies' in Brock & Curthoys (eds.) Oxford University in the Nineteenth Century pp.513-5
majority of references to ancient history examined were made by university-educated MPs, who constituted only a minority of the Commons as a whole. These references were to not just the same authors or periods, but some of the same issues, as those most discussed in university teaching – the origins of 'free' institutions, the causes of the collapse of the Roman Republic, or the merits or demerits of Roman imperialism.

The history of the British conception of the British Empire as a 'new Roman Empire' has been written, but tends to begin in the mid-late nineteenth century; Phiroze Vasunia begins his study of 'Greater Rome and Greater Britain' in the aftermath of the Indian Rebellion. The last chapter explores the degree to which the image of a Roman proconsul and the example of the ancient empires appealed to and informed the officials of earlier colonies and of the East India Company, not to mention the parliamentarians who exercised a distant and vague oversight between the 1750s and 1850s. This is a commonplace observation of the British Empire of the 1850s which has previously been little considered for the embryonic empire of the late eighteenth century. It is thus interesting to note the degree to which parliamentarians, governors and judges looked to Rome for examples of how to rule a polyglot empire of many and distant subject peoples – a far truer analogy than the often unsatisfactory comparisons between ancient and modern colonisation, or between ancient and contemporary political disorder.

The English universities were in a weakened condition, both socially and intellectually, just as new challenges emerged to the humanist conception of the classical world as a living alternative to contemporary practice. The case for the continuing importance of ancient history – in all its variety – was made largely outside the schools and universities, and perhaps for that reason lacked, except for a few famous individuals and incidents, the force to have a greater influence in the public discourse of the educated classes. This would explain the patterns of reference to ancient history seen especially in Chapter 11; many references covering a range of situations, but few going outside a narrow comfort-zone familiar from school texts, and interpretations increasingly questioned (and indeed inaccurate) outside that area.

This study has covered a great deal of ground and has inevitably had to omit interesting lines of inquiry, many of which would benefit from further study. In particular, there has been very

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2 P.Vasunia, The Classics and Colonial India (Oxford 2013) pp.119-57
little consideration here of the Dissenting Academies in England. The Dissenting Academies Project was expected to publish *A History of the Dissenting Academies in the British Isles, 1660-1860* during the course of research and I delayed discussion of history teaching and learning in those institutions to take account of that work and in particular John Gascoigne's chapter on History in the dissenting curriculum. The publication date has been delayed and the volume is currently (August 2015) in the press. A comparison between the Dissenting Academies and the established universities would be valuable, as would an extended analysis of the Academies' libraries and their holdings in ancient history compared with those in the (fragmentary, incomplete and inconsistent) catalogues of colleges and undergraduate libraries elsewhere.

It would be valuable to set alongside this study of ancient history in the academy a similar investigation of the teaching of the rest of what we would now term the humanities, building on Anthony Grafton's work in *What Was History?*, with a more specifically academic focus. The boundaries between ancient and modern in history are unclear even today, much less in the eighteenth century, and I have erred on the side of inclusiveness, but modern history and its intersections with other 'humanities' subjects would bear further inquiry. The place of modern learning beyond the sciences was contested in universities well after the period discussed here. As well as moral philosophy and political economy, such a study might cover rhetoric and its outgrowth belles-lettres, common law, vernacular poetry and the modern languages, perhaps also extending to church history and other points of contact between sacred and profane learning. Such studies, with the exception of full-time study at the Scottish Divinity Halls, were usually considered secondary to the 'serious' scientific or classical curriculum, many of them were taught by tutors outside the formal structure of the university, but along with still less academic studies such as fencing and dancing formed a large and under-examined part of the student experience and motivation for attending universities. A more comprehensive understanding of the student experience as a whole, gained through such a study, would allow us to be much more definite about the role played by ancient history.

The opening lines of this thesis posed four questions: what ancient history was taught in universities, how, why, and what did the students do with it? The answer to the first question is that there was an inconsistent, but widespread, desire to teach students about the history

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3 [http://www.english.qmul.ac.uk/drwilliams/academies.html](http://www.english.qmul.ac.uk/drwilliams/academies.html) (accessed 21 July 2015)

and culture of the ancient world, with a particular focus on Republican Rome, both for its own sake and as a preparation for other studies or professions. The principal historians read were those also being read as literature in the fashions of the day, but among the limited detailed evidence of teaching there are several examples of the use of modern works on ancient history as teaching texts, and of extensive reference to historians considered lacking in purely literary merit. The teaching of ancient history was carried out in different ways across universities and periods, though collegiate teaching produced, in general, a more particular, focused approach, and university-wide lectures a more general overview.

The exact mix of motivations for teaching ancient history is similarly varied, but it appears throughout the period and across the British Isles in attempts to make the university education more truly 'liberal'. Ancient history, whether alone or in combination with philosophy or classics, could be both useful knowledge and a good mental training. This balance is exemplified by Copleston's praise of ancient history that 'from no study can an Englishman acquire a better insight into the mechanism and temper of civil government: from none can he draw more instructive lessons ... from none can he better learn how to play skilfully upon and how to keep in order that finely-toned instrument, a free people.' Thomas Gordon treating ancient history as 'an epitome of the history of mankind' conveyed a similar sense of both moral purpose in demonstrating the full range of human nature, and practical lessons in political organisation. Finally, the range of reference to ancient history in political discourse shows both of these uses of ancient history; the use of moral examples drawn from, again mostly Roman, history is seen across political divides and different types of debate. There is also more specific, granular engagement with the ancient world across these debates, with Roman society, and particularly ways of relating to empire, considered as serious sources of inspiration and political wisdom.
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